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THE SPHERE, DECEMBER 16, 1944
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THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXXIX No. 2343 WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC DECEMBER 16 1944

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THE SPHERE
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The Empire's Illustrated Weekly

AFTER THE LIBERATION OF THE TOWN OF BLERICK, ON THE RIVER MAAS, DURING THE BATTLE FOR THE "FORTRESS TOWN" OF VENLO: A British soldier crawls along a street in the deserted town on the look-out for stray German snipers

An operation by troops of the British Second Army opposite Venlo began on December 3 and resulted in the virtual elimination of the German bridgehead on the west bank of the River Maas. By December 5 only a few snipers remained to be dealt with by infantry in the town of Blerick, a suburb of Venlo. The British forces entered Blerick across a wide and deep anti-tank ditch. Blerick, once a town of 10,000 inhabitants, was desolate when the British entered, but the remaining civilians were soon out in the streets, gathering their belongings and being helped out when the town was shelled by the Germans from across the Maas

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A WAR NEWSLETTER —No. 276

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

Twelve Million.—Information bureaux have in the years of war proved very nimble and very exuberant accountants. If we were to accept as gospel all the "authoritative" figures of German battle casualties published at intervals since 1939, we should be quite justified in saying that one way and another 30,000,000 German troops have been put permanently or temporarily out of the war—which is absurd. But if we rely solely on the authorised figures of war casualties published (as revised) during 1944 by Russia, Britain, America and (now) France, we are compelled to the conclusion that the German armed forces have lost permanently the services of at least 12,000,000 fighting men—about a sixth of the total population, male, female, infants, adult, halt and maimed. That figure would, I think, be a record percentage of fighting men liquidated in any war in history, and it takes no account of civilian casualties, which everywhere have reached undreamed of records in the present war. Our dilemma is: May we believe these spectacular estimates, or must we doubt the value of official statistics? The dilemma is the harder to resolve in the absence of any guiding data by military theorists of the past as to the maximum percentage in ratio to population of permanent fighting casualties, beyond which a nation in arms cannot continue to combine the twin duties of fighting and supplying itself with arms and essential services. And that deduction is complicated in this war by the recruitment of unknown millions of foreign slave-labour into the Reich.

When Greek Meets Greek.—. . . Then comes the tug-of-war. I presume the tag has a basis in historical tradition, and that the Greeks are remarkable among the nations for bitterness in political controversy and for internecine party strife. With them, as with others, two days to thank God, and what not, for deliverance; and then out with the personal axes again! It is tragic; but who shall throw the stone? Someone who is blind to the key danger which waits on resettlement? Four years of war (1914-18) drove the nations of Europe mad, and in that disturbed state much of the resettlement was made or shaped, dooming the world inevitably to another war. What will be the result of six years (1939-45)? As for Greece, a full belly is a wonderful nostrum for internal peace, and the Greeks to-day are starved and in desperate plight, physical and moral. The last man to blame must be their Premier, elected to perform miracles, to make bricks without straw, to rebuild without bricks or mortar, spades and hods, or craftsmen. In the last five years we have seen Greece in the heights and in the depths. Even her young men, now fighting each other, have learned the lessons by personal experience of what national unity and disunity can achieve. "Of two such lessons, why forget the nobler and the manlier one?" It is easy to say, but the primal curse of war is already in evidence elsewhere as well as in Greece.

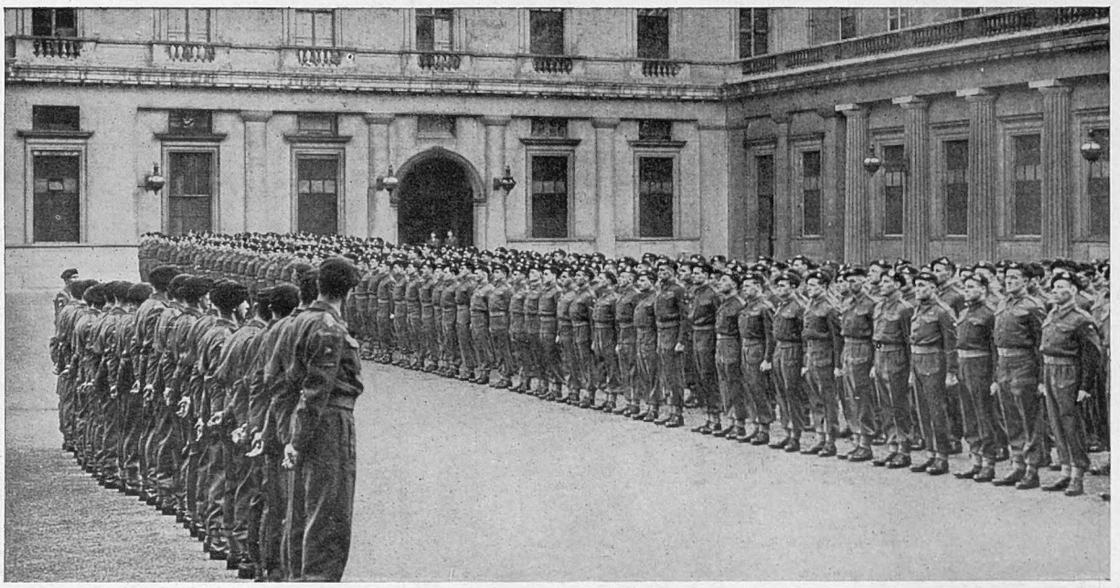
"Bread on the Waters."—Correspondents are now writing to me in this sense: "If I were Dictator Churchill, I should just pull out our troops and leave the Greeks to starve and cut one another's throats." I don't subscribe to that simplification. It begs too many questions. I want proof that Churchill *is* a dictator outside Britain. I want a military appreciation of the relative *military* importance of Greece in the plan of the Allied grand strategy to-day. Is that importance less or more than Italy's, Poland's, Belgium's? As for leaving the Greeks, or any other nation, to starve, I can't forget that a full belly is Peace's best friend, and that Bolshevism, Nazism (and, if you like, Chartism) were all (to use an Irishism) conceived and developed in empty bellies. Laugh and grow fat is a wise saw, the experience of generations of humanity. Full-blooded men and men that sleep o' nights in warm beds do not plot the murder of Cæsars and the overthrow of Governments. On the contrary, they go to the races and the Lidos or help the stockbrokers to grow rich. Even in 1939 the most aggressive had a certain suspicion that war has boomerang qualities, and that Peace and Ease are, on the whole, desirable, and that full bellies and full treasuries, if obtainable, have more lasting and intrinsic value than military glory and the pomps of war. The waters of Europe are troubled to-day. Bread is short. But, so far as may be, I think we should cast our bread upon the waters. It is an excellent substitute for oil, which is in even shorter supply.

Restrained Laughter?—The German broadcast in the first week of December on the *present State of Europe in the Throes of Bolshevism* was quite amusing, and the most implacable mind could hardly quarrel with Dr. Goebbels, hard-pressed for good copy, for making the most of it. Greece has made him a free gift of which he made good use. And who wouldn't, changy for changy? Certainly our Mr. Bracken would not have let slip such an opportunity. And, apropos, why is no publicity ever given in our Press to these German broadcasts? How can we fairly decide what policy we wish Mr. Eden to pursue as regards intervention in the domestic politics of Greece, Italy, Belgium, Poland, if we do not have a chance to see current results from the angle of view of the enemy we are fighting? Can it be that the Government is uneasy about the effect of these splendid opportunities which the intransigence of some of our Allies and their internecine domestic quarrels are giving to the Nazis? Do they fear that Mr. Churchill or Mr. Eden will lose face in Britain? We are allowed to hear what America thinks of it all. Is it more dangerous for our Government's reputation that we should hear what our doomed enemy is saying? I can hardly think so; and in so saying I reserve judgment regarding our policy in Greece and Italy, for I lack the knowledge of facts which would enable me to arrive at an opinion. And, anyway, I have another theory as to the prime cause of these upheavals in European capitals. But (to put it at its lowest) life is sombre enough to-day, and I think our Press (if it be not muzzled) has a duty to supply us with the light relief of Dr. Goebbels' golden opportunity to shout "*I told you so.*"

The Painful Inch and Flooding Main.—We are back again to find consolation in Clough's famous poem, which this long war has worked to death. We see only the painful inch on every front. The silent flooding-in of the main is for the eye of faith only. Patience is a virtue to which we are constantly referred. The trouble has been that sudden bursts of optimism break in even among our leaders and destroy the good work which their warnings and admonishment may do. "My patience is exhausted" is not alone the cry of heady aggressors who see a chance to strike. Six years of total war exhausts all stocks of the commodity. The weather and the holding up of our use of many Channel ports gave the Nazis a chance to reorganise after the debacles of Normandy and on the Eastern fronts. They used their opportunities to good purpose. Bad weather, lack of communications and quite unexpected resistance have halted what looked a few months ago to be a pursuit to Berlin. And now, in the darkest days of the year and the most tragic phase of a frightful war, the painful inch gained here and there (at what a cost and with what indescribable heroism and discomfort!) suggests "tired waves vainly breaking" rather than manifestations of the main flooding-in. It is natural enough. Humanity is tired of being told to wait a little longer for the end of agony and destruction. It has forgotten the lesson of the Caen slogging-match and the prelude to El Alamein. But, in truth, it should not forget those lessons, for to-day the signs are clearer and more convincing that the tide is piling up to the flood. I am convinced that, east and west simultaneously, that flood is soon to surge against Germany's last defences, perhaps before Christmas. Meanwhile, let us admit that the painful inch in Hungary, and even on the right wing of the Western Front, is more nearly an ell. And our enemies may well spell it with an "h." I believe most confidently that we are on the threshold of a vast united Allied effort to end the business by simultaneous all-out assaults at every section of the fortress wall from Norway clockwise to Holland.

Lord Crewe.—Lord Crewe is another disappearing landmark. He is retiring from the position of Liberal Leader in the House of Lords. In that office he succeeded Lord Reading, and he has admirably discharged it for nine years, and for seven of them as an octogenarian. Talk of too old at fifty! There were giants in those days and Lord Crewe is one of them. He held office in a Gladstone Administration. Over half-a-century ago he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. If, as I hope, the Liberal Party can somehow close its ranks, it may yet offer a strong appeal to countless voters who are tired of the labels attached to two other parties whose shop windows are dressed with the same specimens of goods. I don't say that United Liberalism can discover new goods to offer or display, but the name means something. There are still Englishmen who remember with gratitude the contributions of the Whigs and forget their past frailties and divisions. The post of Liberal Leader in either House may well gain in importance now, and Lord Samuel should admirably fill the bill. Lord Crewe (if I may say so) occupies in Liberalism very much the position which Lord Salisbury and Lord Derby hold in Conservatism to-day. He exemplifies the dignity and the sense of duty, the integrity and other civilising virtues in English politics of a governing class and an "hereditary legislator" class, which in my youth were still accepted not only as fitting, but as efficient, in both Houses. His achievements in public life are honourable and are remembered. His versatility may be less well known. In literature he holds a recognised place as author of an admirable biography and of more than one poem of first-rate merit. His father was Lord Houghton. Heredity plays its part in every field of a man's career.

THE OLD STAGER



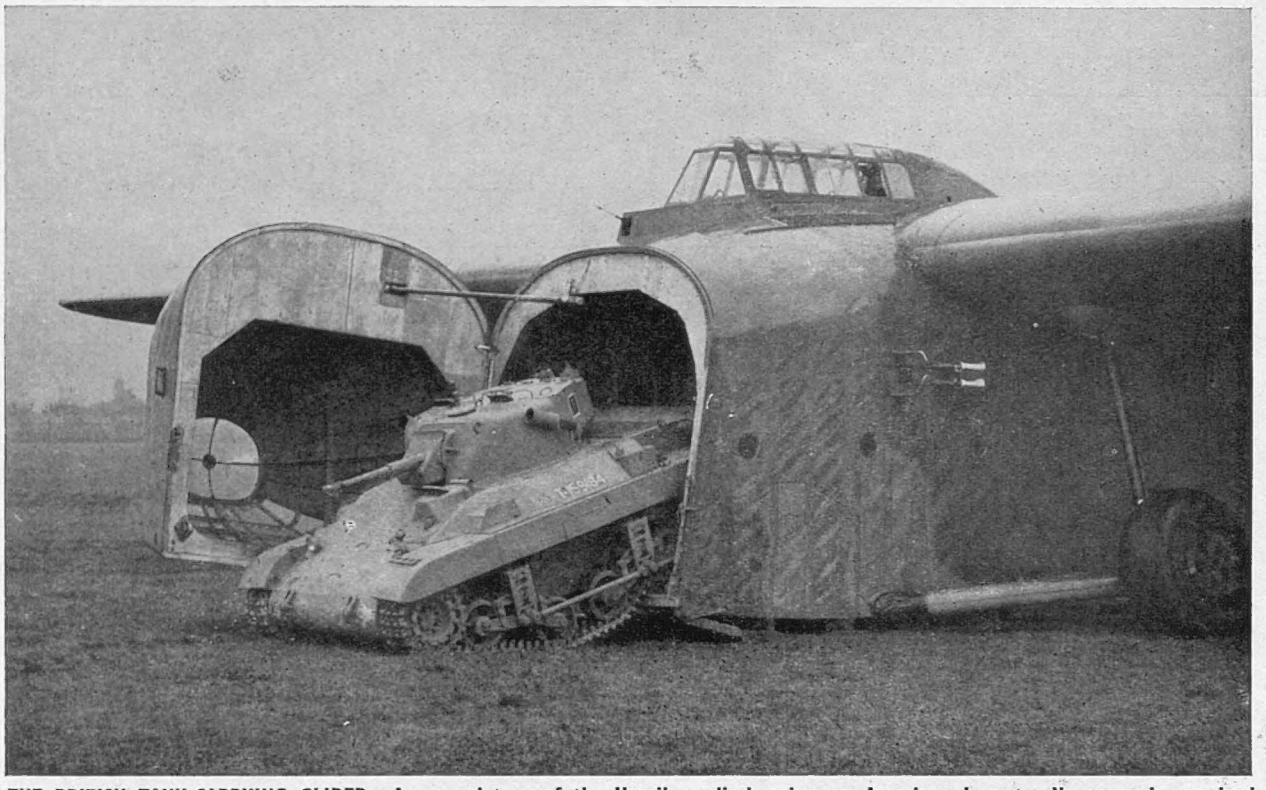
THE MEN OF ARNHEM LINED UP IN THE QUADRANGLE OF BUCKINGHAM PALACE to witness sixty-one of their company being decorated by the King for their bravery during nine days in Holland

Four hundred and thirty-eight men who fought for nine days at Arnhem went to Buckingham Palace a few days ago to witness the bestowal of awards on sixty-one of their comrades by the King. The awards were made up of one V.C., two C.B.s, seven D.S.O.s, nineteen M.C.s, seven D.C.M.s, and twenty-five M.M.s. Before the investiture, the men marched from Wellington Barracks to the Palace; they stayed there for two hours

THE ARNHEM V.C., MAJOR ROBERT CAIN, of the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, who received his Cross on December 6th when the Arnhem men went to the Palace

A FIRST PICTURE OF THE ATHENS REVOLT : General Scobie, the British Commander in Greece, confers with the two rival leaders. This picture was taken just before the flare-up between the contending parties : it shows the meeting of the leaders of the two chief political parties before the outbreak of rioting in Athens. On the left is General Stephanos Saraphis, leader of the E.L.A.S., and on the right is General Napoleon Zervas, leader of the E.D.E.S. organisation : the former is the Left Wing movement and the latter the Right Wing, or Government, movement. At the meeting, the chief subject for discussion was the formation of a Greek National Guard and the disbanding of the guerilla forces. Recent events have proved that this meeting was a failure!

THE DEMONSTRATION IN ATHENS, organised by E.A.M. and attended by many women adherents of the Left Wing movement. A British soldier is seen in the foreground

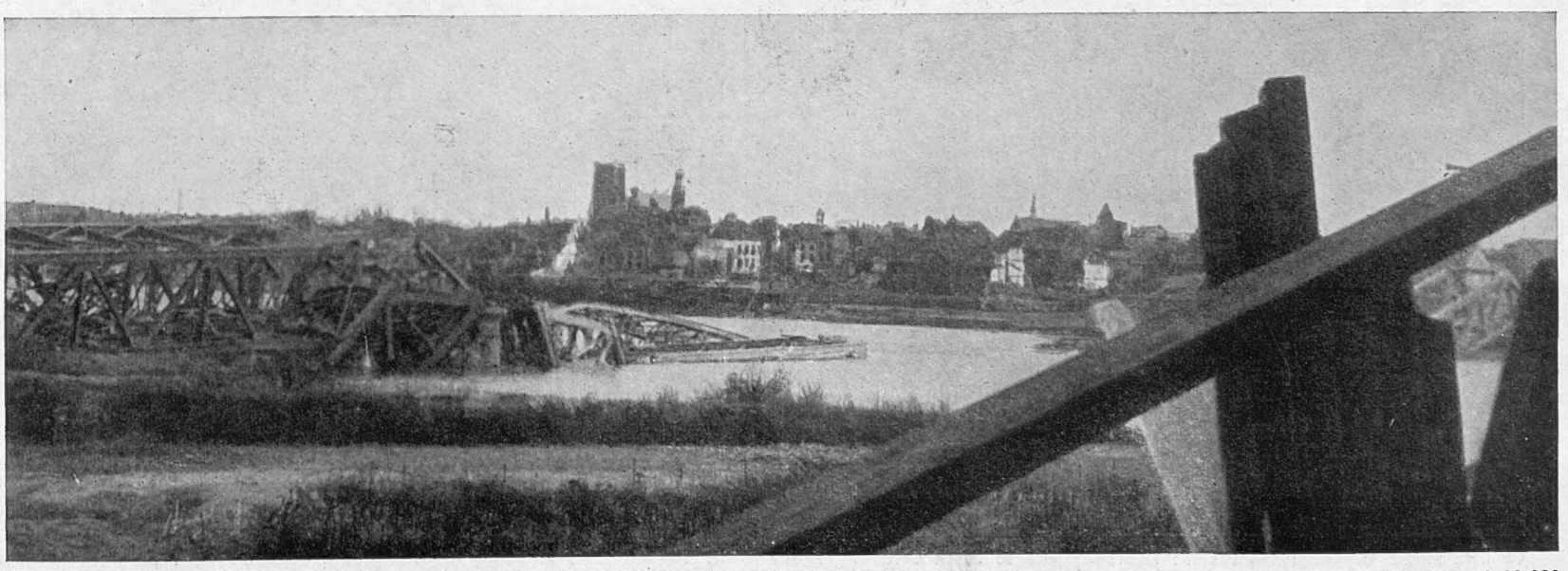


THE BRITISH TANK-CARRYING GLIDER : A new picture of the Hamilcar discharging an American Locust. No ramp is required, the vehicle driving straight out of the nose of the glider : it can go into action within 15 seconds of the touch-down. The tank crew are also carried in the Hamilcar

LATE NEWS PICTURES

From Athens and from Holland

On left—The Hamilcar glider, fully loaded, weighs some 36,000 lb., or 15 tons. It was designed by a team of over 100 draughtsmen and twenty technicians, and took twelve months to design and build. It is the largest wooden aircraft ever constructed and can carry a large variety of loads. The Hamilcar is towed by our most powerful four-engined bombers, and has a specially-designed nose-opening door so that vehicles can go into action in as little time as 15 seconds after the glider has touched down. No ramp is required when unloading tanks, as the American-built Locust seen in the picture on the left can be driven straight out. In this manner, the Hamilcar has been used successfully in Normandy and at Arnhem



THE TOWN OF VENLO, ACROSS THE RIVER MAAS, AS SEEN FROM NEWLY-CAPTURED BLERICK. The latter was captured on December 3 : it is a town of 10,000 inhabitants and a suburb of the "fortress city" of Venlo, on the west bank of the Maas. Across the river lies the even bigger town which bars the way into Germany. In this picture, the railway bridge is seen collapsed into the Maas after its demolition by the retreating Germans : 170 yards away, on the farther bank, is Venlo, on which our artillery and rifle fire is now concentrated

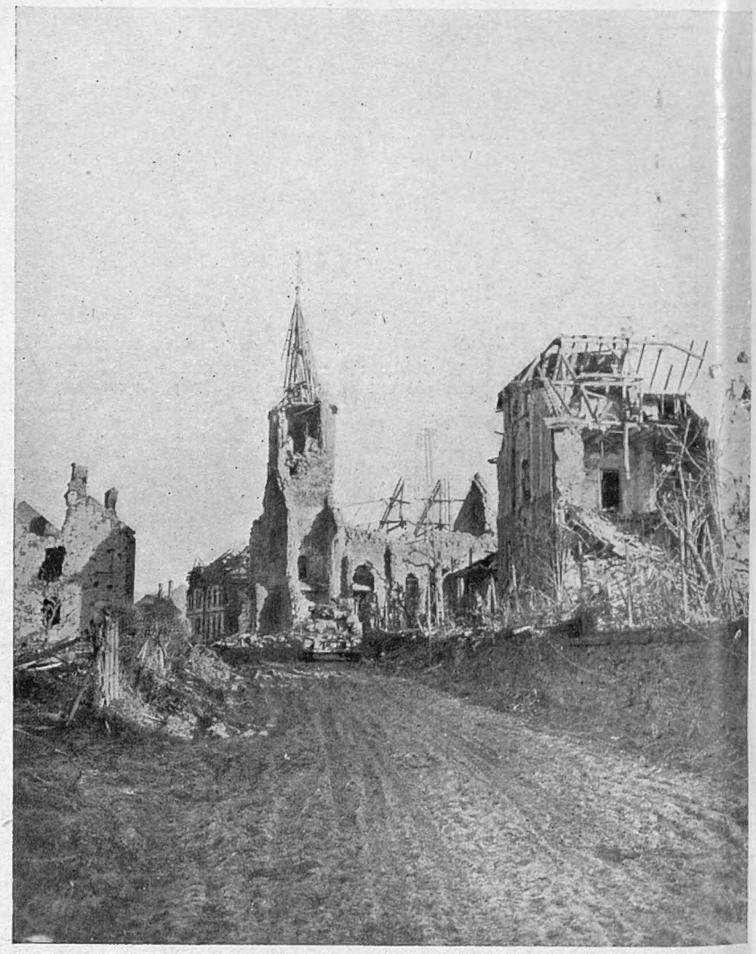
A BRITISH PATROL ENTERS THE RUINS OF THE CHÂTEAU DE GEIJSTEREN : awaiting the all-clear signal of the patrol leader. A reconnaissance patrol of British infantry was detailed to search the ruins of this château after it had been attacked several times by rocket-firing Typhoons of the R.A.F. The castle was the home of Baron Weichs de Wennee, Chamberlain to Queen Wilhelmina, and had been held by a party of German troops who put up a stiff resistance until the Typhoons drove them over the Maas. The château was under observation from the opposite bank of the river while the patrol operated, and was open to the fire of rifles, mortars and 88-mm. guns

A FLAME-THROWING INFANTRYMAN HAS HIS APPARATUS BUCKLED ON : This is the "Lifebuoy," so-called because of its appearance : the fuel is carried in the ring-shaped tube on the man's back, and the flame is projected from a "gun" in which is incorporated an igniting mechanism. The "Lifebuoy" has a range of about 50 yards and has been used with conspicuous success against pill-boxes and strong-points

ON THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN FRONTS

—New Pictures from the Fighting Zones in Holland and Germany

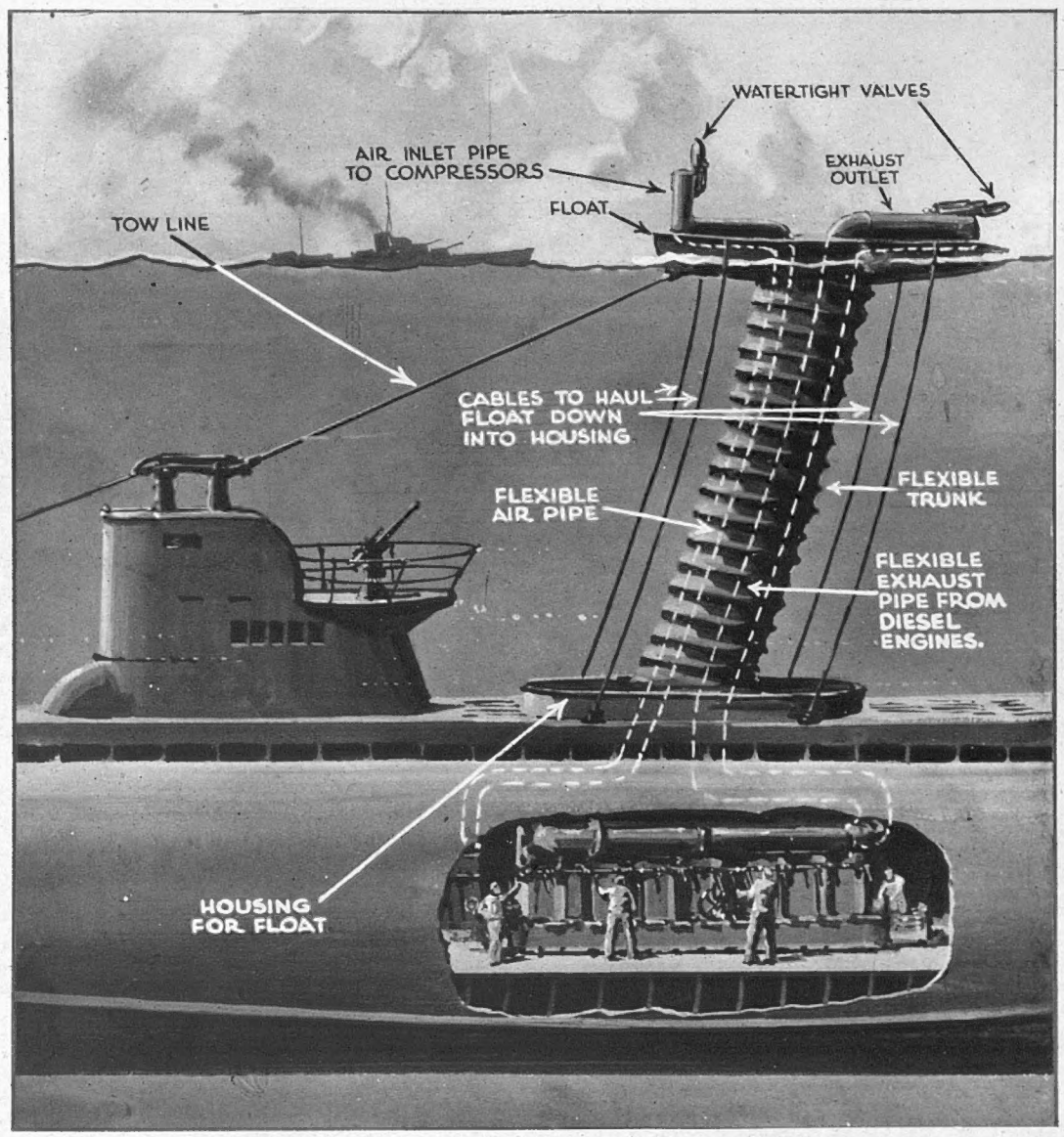
ON THE BANKS OF THE MAAS RIVER : A British post to check German "intruder patrols" near Geijsteren. The British Second Army are now holding a "winter line" along the river banks. But small patrols of Germans intrude at night and in the early morning, and British troops are constantly going over the forward area on the look-out for them. Here a small party are watching one of the roads near Geijsteren at a point where the Germans sometimes slip over the river



IN THE SHELL-TORN TOWN OF HUERTGEN, NEAR AACHEN : an American Sherman tank rolls past the shattered church. This is in the zone of the U.S. First Army : it lies to the east of Aix la Chapelle (Aachen) at the edge of the great Huertgen Forest, in Germany, through which our Allies have just worked their way after heavy fighting. Huertgen itself has been heavily shelled, and its roads have been churned up by the ceaseless flow of big vehicles towards the front

MEN OF THE 59TH DIVISION WAITING TO MOVE INTO THE FRONT LINE NEAR SAARLAUTERN (SAARLOUIS) on the U.S. Third Army's Sector. Fighting in this district has been particularly bitter as General Patton's men have advanced into one of Germany's important industrial regions. Saarlautern was occupied a fortnight ago, and since then Saareguemines and other towns and villages have also fallen. Clashes between Allied and enemy armour have taken place as the Americans pressed on relentlessly towards Saarbruecken, the capital of the region

A BATTERY OF AMERICAN 105-MM. FIELD-GUNS FIRING AT GERMAN POSITIONS ACROSS THE SAAR. The U.S. artillery concentrations are very powerful all along the Western Front and have carried out many heavy bombardments of the German positions. On the Third Army front in the Saar they have been firing over the Siegfried Line on the communication points, cross-roads and railway lines in the rear of the German defences. They have shelled thirty-two German towns: where the weather has been too bad for the fighter-bombers to operate, the artillery have fired "air bursts" over miles of main roads behind the front. These actually strafe the roads with bursting shrapnel so much that we may well be denying the enemy any considerable use of them

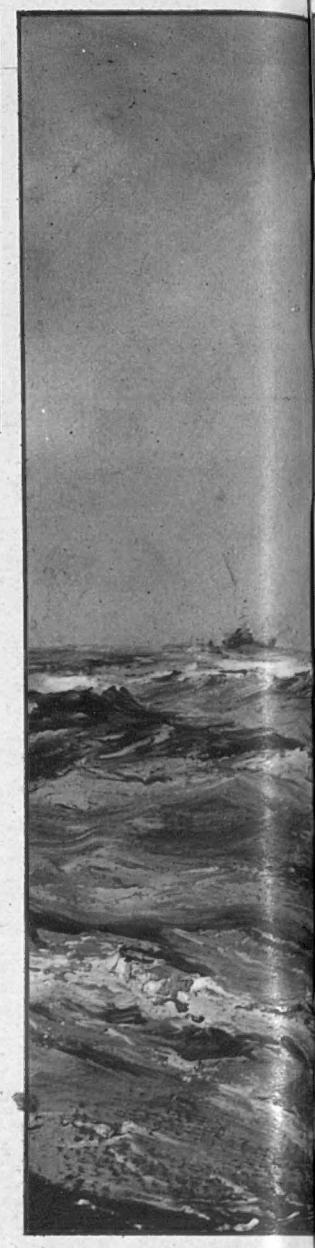


THE NEW DEVICE WHEREBY THE OCEAN-GOING GERMAN SUBMARINES WERE ENABLED TO INCREASE THEIR UNDER-WATER ENDURANCE—the Schnorkel, or "snort," device which allows them to recharge their batteries without surfacing—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

The U-BOAT SITUATION in 1944

The New Methods Used Against Them, and the New Tactics They have been Forced to Adopt

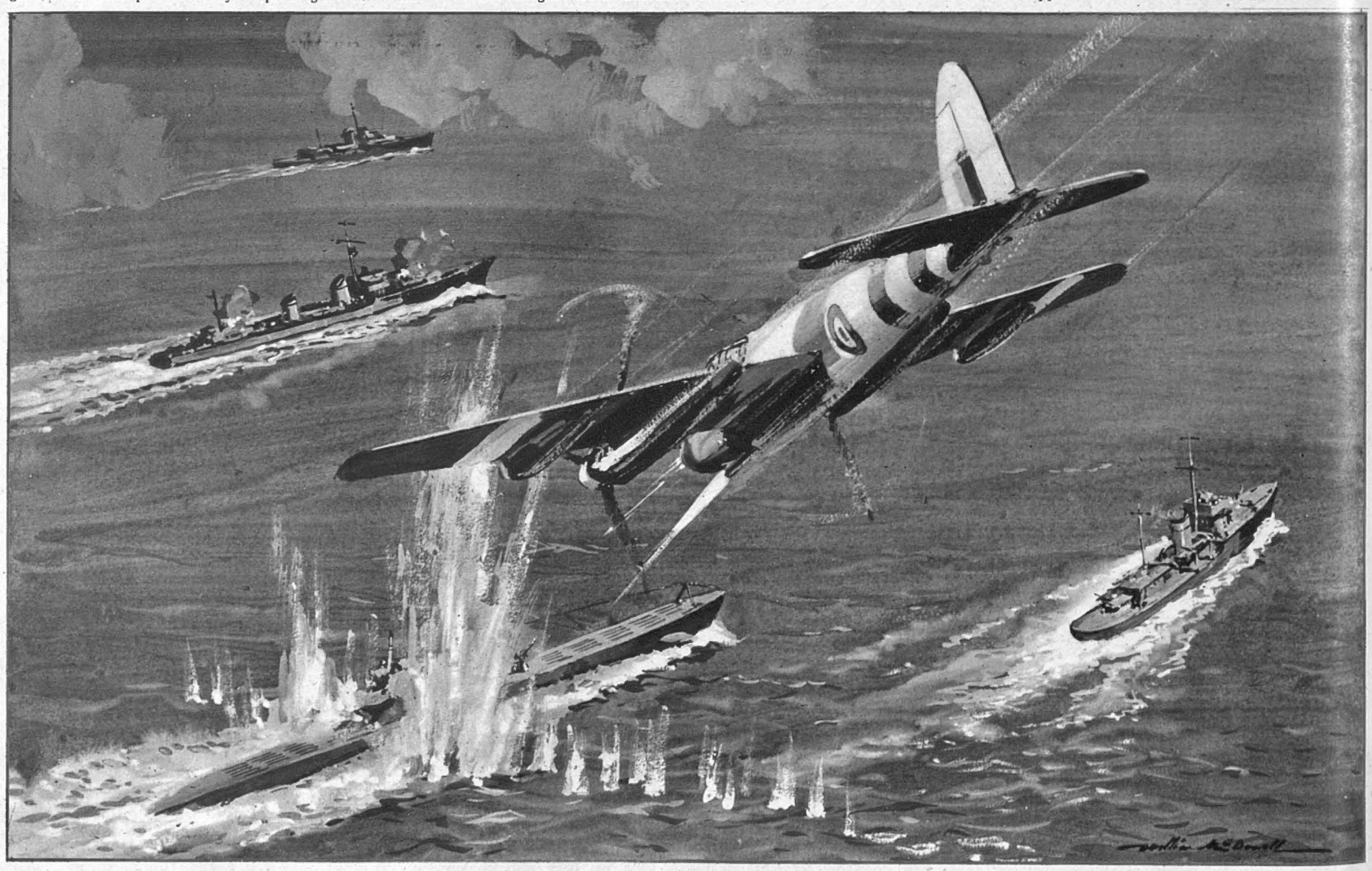
Special Sphere Drawings



It has been reported that German technicians have evolved a device to enable the U-boats to use their main Diesel engines when submerged. This necessity has arisen because of the continued attacks by Mosquitoes armed with 6-pounder guns, which have proved deadly weapons against the under-water craft. The device has been called the Schnorkel, or spiral, by the Germans; and the Navy's term for it is "the snort." It consists of a telescopic combined air-intake and exhaust-pipe, "so designed that the outgoing exhaust gases do not mingle with or interfere with the fresh air taken in for the intake of the Diesel engine."

The drawing reproduced here shows the probable arrangement of the "snort." On the superstructure of the submarine, and just over the Diesel engine-room, a housing is arranged to accommodate a boat-shaped float. This is releasable from within the submarine, and carries to the surface a flexible trunk containing two flexible pipes—one to take in air and the other to deliver the exhaust gases from the Diesel engines. The float is held and towed by a steel cable to prevent it being dragged under the surface, and cables are arranged to haul the float down again into its housing. The air inlet and the exhaust outlet are arranged as far apart on the float as possible.

Such a device can only have a limited use, for the following reasons: it cannot be used at any great depth on account of the difficulties of overcoming the water pressure and the stowage of a trunk and pipes of any great length. Nor can it be used with a heavy sea running, for if the air inlet became even temporarily submerged water would be sucked into the air compresses, with highly dangerous results. It cannot be possible for the submerged submarine to move at any speed while using such a device owing to the natural tendency of the float to "tow under." In any case, an elaborate arrangement of valves would be needed, to close both the upper and lower ends of the pipes in emergency.



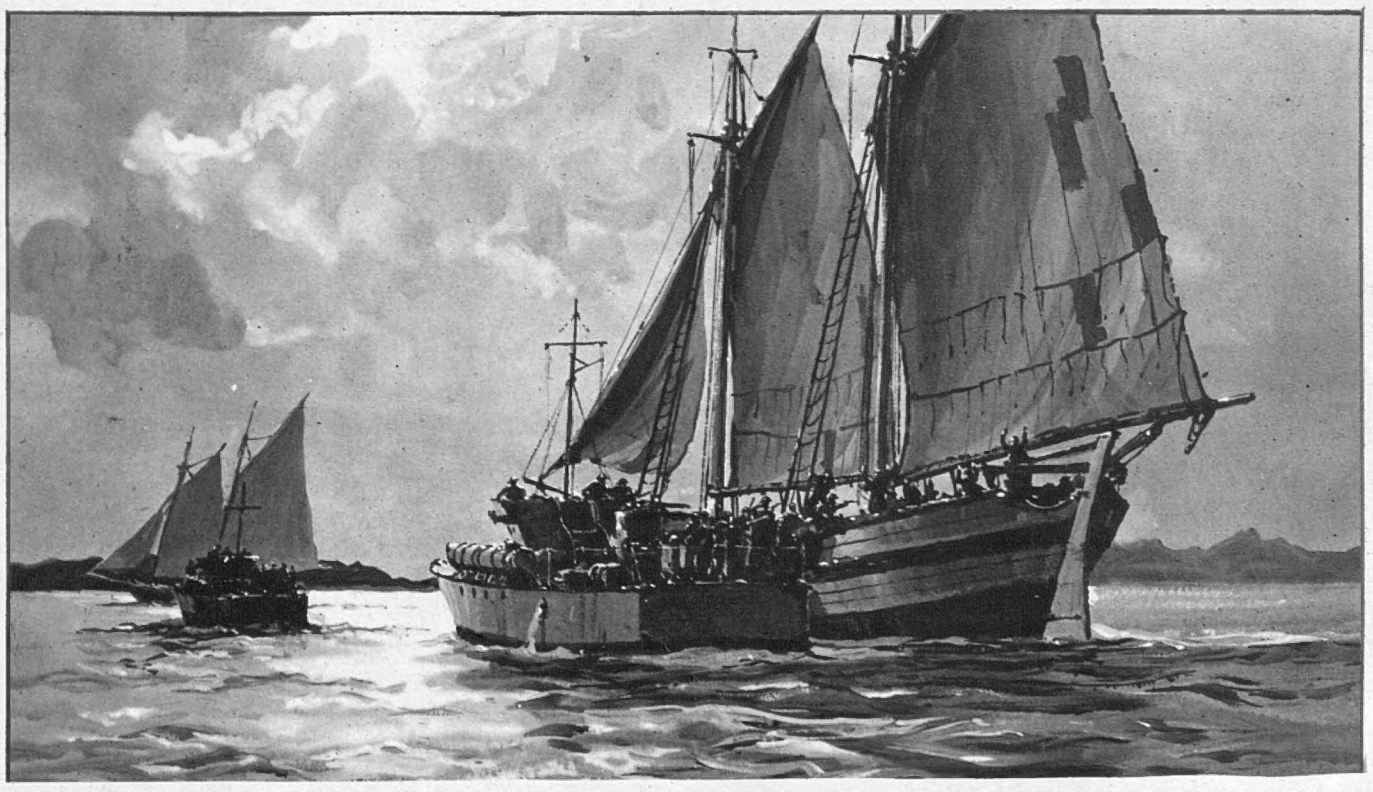
A GERMAN SUBMARINE IS CAUGHT ON THE SURFACE BY THE ROYAL NAVY AND IS FORCED TO SUBMERGE HURRIEDLY, BECAUSE OF THE INFERIORITY OF ITS GUN-POWER. The vessel shown here is of the ocean-going Atlantic type—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

Although one hears comparatively little of the war at sea, there are still many U-boats at large, although the Germans have lost many of their bases in France: and there are indications that they intend to stage one final submarine campaign before the war ends. Beaten from the surface by our escort and anti-submarine vessels, and deterred from combating our aircraft with their deck guns owing to the new 6-pounder guns of the Mosquitoes, the U-boat has been passing through a very uncomfortable phase. Yet the new device invented by the Germans and illustrated on these pages has given the submarine a new lease of life—and an extended range of action.

In the drawing by Mr. Dawson reproduced above, a recent typical action at sea is depicted, between surface vessels of the Royal Navy and a large ocean-going U-boat: the latter has no option but to submerge, so devastating have our methods and technique become

On left—**THE SECRET GUN OF THE MOSQUITO, which forced the Nazi U-boats to change their tactics**
—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell*

It was only recently that it was revealed that a new British secret weapon has been responsible for the change in tactics observed by the enemy's U-boats. This weapon is the 6-pounder gun with which Mosquitoes of R.A.F. Coastal Command are now equipped. On November 4, 1943, an armed German trawler was first attacked with the 6-pounder. Very soon the U-boats were being pursued in the same manner. The gun is slung beneath the fuselage of the Mosquito and fires shells in quick succession as the aircraft dives in to the attack. Thus even the waters close to the French coast were found to be highly dangerous for German submarines, which might have been patrolling at sea for weeks on end. The enemy were forced to provide an escort of surface ships and fighters to protect their U-boats leaving or entering harbour. Even then, despite the flak, the fast-flying Mosquitoes have been able to carry out successful actions against the submarines in the manner shown in the drawing on the left. In these, not only have the U-boats been hit and damaged and sunk, but also the escorting vessels



IN THE ADRIATIC. A British light coastal craft boards, captures and takes in tow an enemy vessel in prize—a return to a typically British naval action—*Drawing by Wm. McDowell.* Twelve minutes only were required by the crew of a light coastal craft to carry out this action recently in the Adriatic. It was accomplished by a unit commanded by a Canadian officer, who thus captured two schooners. In these areas, light coastal forces have revived the ancient practice of boarding and capturing enemy supply ships and escort craft. Commando boarding-parties have been taking part, and many useful prizes, themselves well armed, have been captured, often without a shot being fired. On the night the Canadian officer established his twelve-minute record, his craft were "winkling" the enemy-occupied coasts when they intercepted two small schooners. Neither of the enemy ships gave any trouble, although both were armed with machine-guns and hand-grenades, and one schooner had a deck cargo of 20-mm. guns

THIS GOING TO PARIS BUSINESS

Are the People Most Useful to the Country Being Granted Permits to Visit the French Capital?

By FERDINAND TUOHY

"THERE is a limited amount of transport," added Mr. Morrison. At this there were cries of "Nonsense" from all over the House. Fresh and glowing Mr. Hamilton Kerr, whose projected trip to Paris was vetoed by the Home Office, had previously stated that it was an open secret that transport planes, leaving twice daily, left very often half-empty, and I 'm sure he 'd have no difficulty in assembling adequate evidence. Colleagues coming and going have told me how they 've sat in half- or less-charged planes. The explanation, apparently, is that military and official quarters reserve places for people who find they can't make it, and that there is no reserve system in operation for a far greater number who feel, and indeed often have, as much call to go to France as the ones who could have gone and didn't.

"Lack of transport" in refusing this and that has been overdone as an excuse here at home, as the course of the war has manifestly altered conditions. We know that, given the will, it does not always stand up. In the case of travel with France herself, there was the recent instance of 200 of the F.F.I. being brought from Paris to the coast, across to Newhaven and up to London by train. This journey was adjudged useful. So it was arranged. The point is that other journeys in the reverse direction are similarly useful and could be arranged, given a little more vision on the part of Government departments concerned.

One has the uneasy feeling, as things stand, that the well-off and favoured, or people of both sexes who put themselves over as "inspectors" or as doing welfare work of devious kinds, manage to get to France, together with a questionably lavish assortment of entertainers, whereas people who really ought to go find themselves enmeshed in questionnaires and, in any case, up against that hoary old "no transport" excuse. Take the project of a company going to Paris to play *The Merry Widow*. Is it to be suggested that our men on Paris leave would not be equally captivated by a French company staging *La Veuve Joyeuse*, inasmuch as the music and the girls are what matter in this perennial affair?

PARIS IS TRYING TO REVIVE HER GREAT FASHION INDUSTRY: A recent "mannequin parade" is here seen in progress at one of the great houses, where winter coats of mink and other materials were displayed

There is a real risk of our losing some of present French warmth if we overdo entertaining, with its inevitably attendant Black Market junketing, in this current Paris. On the plea of giving a good time to the boys on leave, there is the risk of a circle of moneyed and privileged frivolity maturing, which could become distasteful to Parisians; the risk of a foreign, even though Allied world-within-a-world developing in a capital in no mood as yet for the time-honoured cosmopolitan bright lights. You had a sign in this direction when, in answer to a request for heating in Montmartre cabarets and places, the Ministry concerned replied that many others in Paris require warmth before people indulging themselves at night-clubs.

Despatches say that 5,000 Americans and 600 British troops may be on short leave daily in Paris. These figures may be all wrong, but such as arrive have, or are, getting their own heated hotels, rooms, hostels, messes, stores, canteens, clubs, theatres, cinemas and sundry other facilities. Compared with the average Parisian, the troops are well off indeed, and this situation could of itself become delicate but for French gratitude and understanding. Particularly on account of the troops' inability to spend a thing among a people *très commercant*. Nor would I mind betting that the average "Tommy" and "Buddy" on Paris leave would prefer more money with which to secure his fun in his own way amid a rate of exchange hopelessly against him than some of the imported efforts to beguile him. Moreover, that way would satisfy the French too.

Those who give visas on both sides of the Atlantic might do worse than keep before them a recollection of Victory Paris after the last war. This had been startlingly won and Parisians were crazier than ourselves. It was, indeed, a riot all round the clock. Let all who cared to come along and dance and drink and engage in delight! Soldier or civilian—who cared? Some were kind of hermaphrodites, able to wear their uniforms for captivation purposes, if they chose, during a final month after demobilisation. Food, heat, light, wine galore. That Victory Paris bears no likeness to the Paris of to-day, full of hungry, cold people with the poison of "collaboration" still working in them, grieving for kith and kin in Germany with a dread question-mark over them—3,000,000, every family in France affected—and deeply apprehensive of what may follow upon a war still to be won.

Two things have now been adumbrated: that transport *could* be made available under civil ægis for a growing number of civilians, and that a sensitive intelligence is needed in the giving of exit permits. The latter observation, in turn, promotes two queries. Who could be of most use to us across the Channel? Whom would the French prefer to see?

The first civilian category to go to Paris was the Press, and rightly so, if it had been properly handled. Leaving America out of it, the Foreign Office have the names of all the pre-war British Paris correspondents. Provided the French agreed, these should have been given transport. Instead of which, platoons of correspondents in uniform, many of them able war reporters, but nearly all untutored in French life and affairs, were shepherded across by Shaef. "Hat correspondents" is a Fleet Street label for some who saw the Liberation in terms of fashion or reinstated music-hall artists during the initial birth-pangs of a new France.

Any pre-war Paris correspondent who has a job waiting for him and is passed fit for scribbling ought to be allowed to go as a civilian, in pyjamas if he wants to. A month ago, two dozen applications had been put in. A few of the old hands have obviously been reinstalled. How many are still waiting I don't know. But I know the French want reputable Pressmen, as many as we care to send, and that the more this country is kept faithfully informed on foreign affairs, very much the better at this juncture.

Now about those other articulators: M.P.s. These too should go and I cannot for the life of me see where the difficulty is. Mr. Morrison himself pointed the way when, in telling Mr. Kerr that Mr. Laski had gone to Paris because the French Socialist Party had asked for him, he added that if a responsible political party had asked for Conservative M.P.s, they too would have been permitted to go. At the moment there is a shortage of Conservatives in France, but Mr. Kerr should not be kept waiting on that account. The obvious solution is to send a dozen or a score of M.P.s of all parties. Transport: one Dakota.

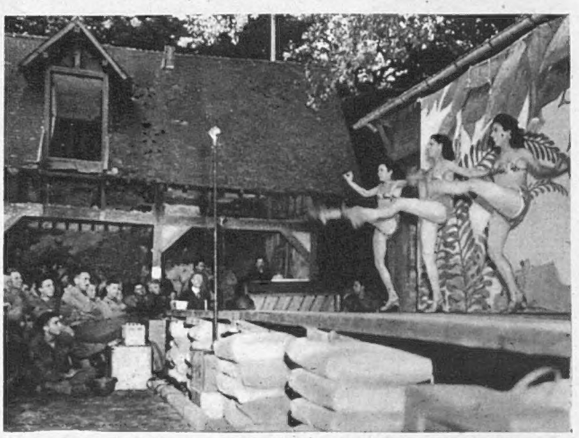
Who next? Who but many hundred "pivotal" British subjects resident in France before the war? These are at present going only in the slightest trickle—Mr. Morrison told how he had been informed by the Minister of Production that important industrial firms, with large commercial and business interests in France, had been unable to send their representatives over. Surely this is a blatant instance of transport rigidity under Shaef, damaging to British prospects? We are well aware that the Americans are go-getting like Old Harry in Paris, and what more customary with Americans, yet we fail to take advantage of a French interest in us, the like of which has not before been known!

Apart from quickly picking up business and professional threads which may otherwise be lost for good, those former British residents in France can be among our best unofficial envoys at the present time. Knowing both nations, they not only can tell the news-famished French what we 've done in the war, how we did it and how we fared, and be listened to as no other Britons because of their intimate contacts and auld lang syne; they can be a real comfort to the French at the present juncture, buoying them up with a cheery: "*N'ayez pas crainte—nous nous débrouillerons ensemble!*"

That too would be listened to, as from no others.

Nor would I delete the pre-war British rentier in France, in a later category, if he or she can face the pound worth four shillings in Paris, and rather more in the country. Folk of independent means who settled in France because they liked it, often developed close local ties and interests and would assuredly be more welcome to the French than some of the kind we are sending over.

I forget how many British subjects were resident in France before the war. Twenty, thirty thousand? Never mind. The majority, especially families, probably cannot consider a return because of the finance question, even if possessions, interest, home, family, friends, all call. Only those ready to ravage savings, to get by by selling the pound for 500 francs in cafés, or whose living expenses will be met by their employers, can really grapple. Others may not wish to see France again until she is in better case—it doesn't need much imagination to conclude that it is no picnic, civilian life in contemporary France with no call on Shaef or the Embassy for housing, food or anything else.



FRANCO-AMERICAN CO-OPERATION: A trio of French chorus-girls entertain a body of American infantry in a show given behind the fighting lines in France

Meanwhile, here is a questionnaire that British subjects have to fill in as a preliminary to getting back to France. After personal details like those figuring on a passport, one is invited to answer:

Profession or occupation in France?

Will your work be of importance or interest either to Britain or France?

Do you own or rent any property in France; if so, where?

Was your principal domicile there?

Do you intend to remain permanently in France?

Are you ready to go, separately from your family?

Were you an employer or an employee in France?

Is your post available to you immediately on your return?

Would you be self-supporting in France?

High up among former British residents anxious to return to France should be placed French people here since 1940 or pre-war days. As yet, they do not seem to be getting a show at all. Said Mr. Morrison: "There were also applications in compassionate cases, sometimes of a pretty serious and dramatic character, and sometimes French people wished to go back." They were having to say "No" to all of them.

What an understatement, that second "sometimes"! If a French vessel were available for a week from the pooled Allied merchant fleet, it could be filled thrice over. Maybe a ship is the ultimate solution of this whole business. Instead of this rarefied, non-paying air travel, maybe, with the New Year, some old hulk will be fished out and put on a weekly cross-Channel service for civilians, paying.

RETURN TO PARIS: Maurice Thorez, General Secretary of the French Communist Party, who has just returned to the French capital after years of exile in Russia, held his first party meeting on November 28, when he attacked General Franco. Thirty thousand Parisians gave him a tremendous welcome at the Vélodrome d'Hiver

THE ADVANCE TO MAWLU : Using whatever transport means are available, the Royal Welch Fusiliers advance steadily to their objective. Here they are crossing the Nankye Chaung. It is 75 miles from Hopin to Mawlu through a monsoon-swept jungle, over Japanese road blocks, through little, devastated villages where every possible track is mined, and along the jagged rocks of a river-bed thigh-deep in oozing, clammy clay. Men of the Royal Scots Fusiliers and East Lancashires, together with British and Indian Engineers and Chinese artillery, swept a roadway through the jungle and captured Mawlu—to make another 75 miles on the road to Tokyo

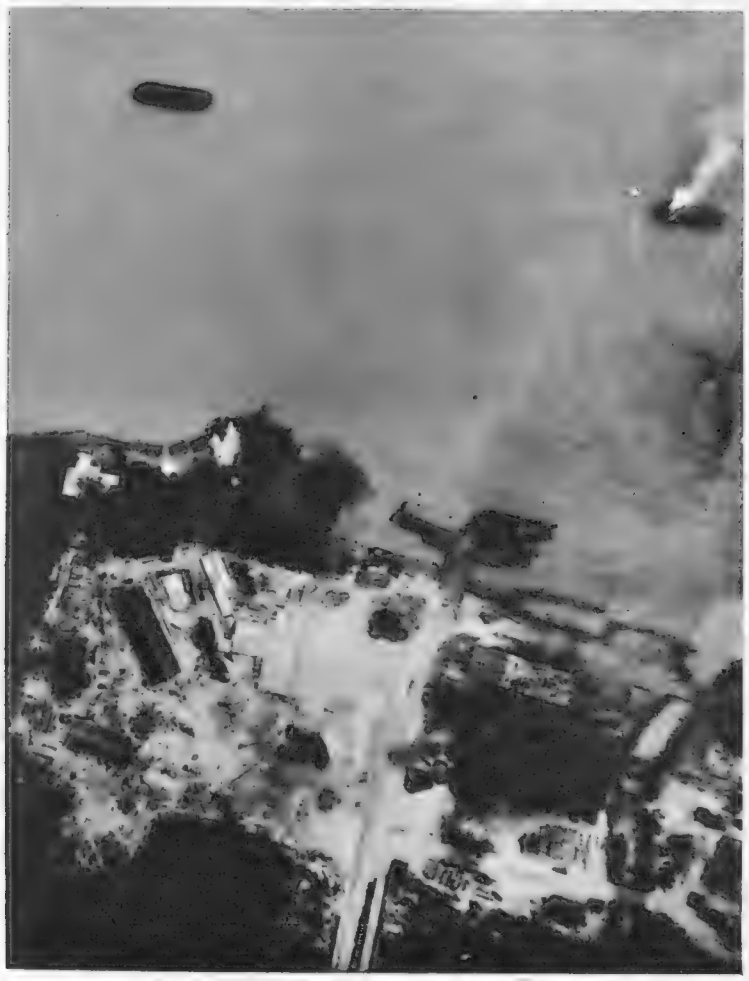
The Latest Pictures from the BURMA JUNGLES

AMERICAN AND BRITISH GENERALS TOUR THE FRONT LINE IN BURMA : Lieut.-General Dan Sultan, who succeeded General Stilwell, is in the centre

On right—

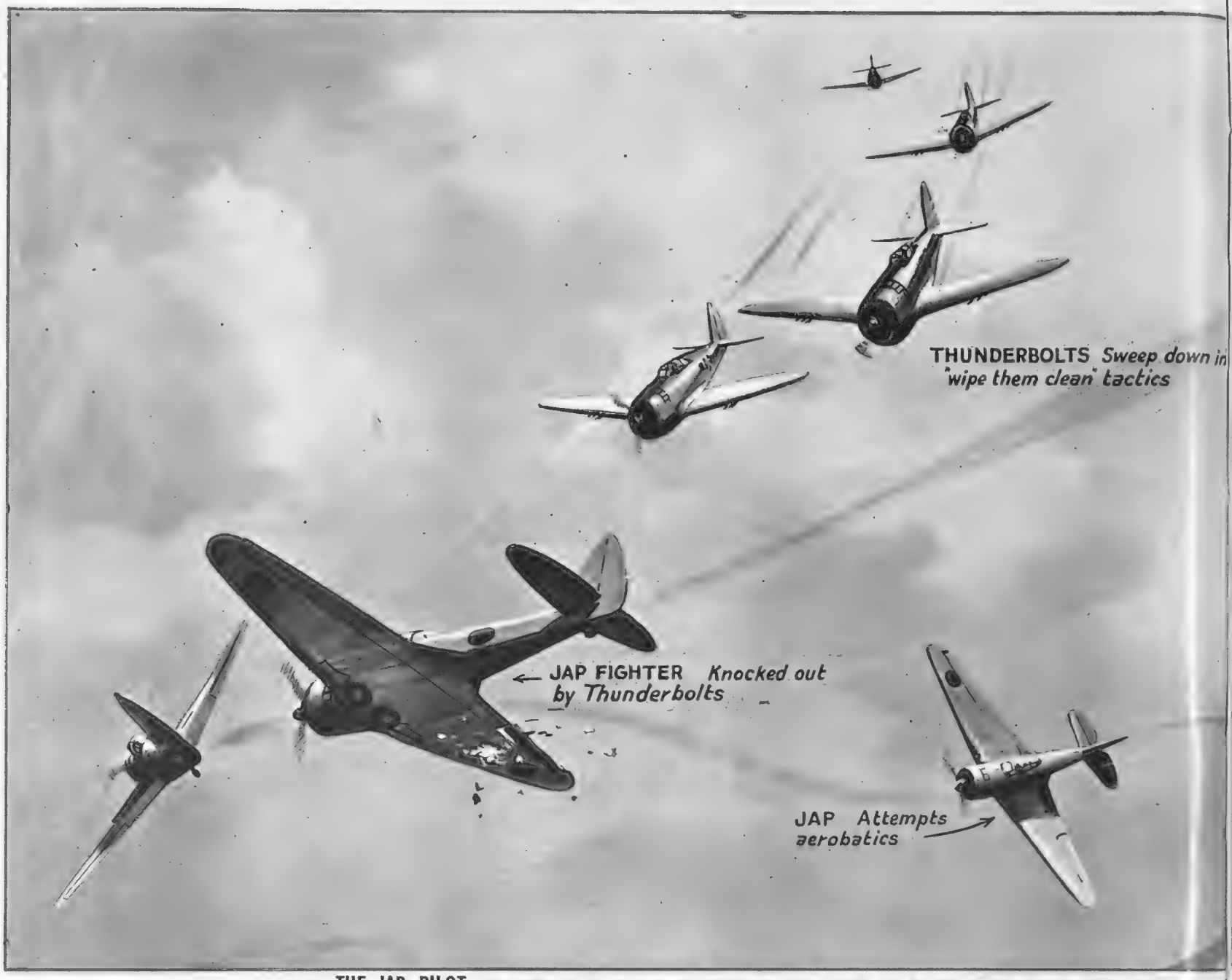
When General Stilwell was relieved of his command in South-East Asia, the conduct of operations in the India-Burma theatre of war was taken over by Lieut.-General Dan Sultan, of the U.S. Army. This picture was taken when, with Major-General F. W. Festing (Commander of the British 36th Division), he toured the forward areas and saw British troops in action. Leaning on a jeep, a Brigade Commander (on the right) points out the lie of the land: General Sultan is in the centre and Major-General Festing on the left

THE FOURTEENTH ARMY ON THE WAY TOWARDS THE JAPS : A patrol advancing through razor-edge grasses near Mohnyin. Through miles of swamp and mud, and acres of impenetrable swamp and scrub, the 36th Division of the Fourteenth Army have just advanced from Hopin to Mawlu, by way of Mohnyin and through numbers of little native villages—all of them fortresses created by the Japs. The 36th Division consists of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, Royal Welch Fusiliers and the East Lancs. Regiment



THE FARTHEST R.A.F. BOMBING RAID ON THE BURMA FRONT, to the port of Khao Huagang in the southern part of the country : Liberator bombers of the Strategic Air Force of the Eastern Air Command flew over 2,300 miles to bomb the newly-built Japanese port of Khao Huagang in Southern Burma. This was the longest distance ever flown by the R.A.F. over Burma : for more than thirteen hours in daylight the aircraft flew to the southernmost tip of Burma, just where the Malay Peninsula begins. Sticks of high explosives and incendiary bombs straddled the whole port area, starting fires and several explosions. Special attacks were made against the jetty areas, and a vessel of over 1,000 tons was left blazing fiercely. Khao Huagang is a terminus port for linking west and east, so providing an alternative route if the Singapore-Bangkok-Rangoon railway is severed. It has come into existence since the Japanese occupation of Burma and Siam, the railway being completed last April. This photograph shows the brilliant glare of an ammunition dump that blew up. Shipping and port installations can be seen belching forth black smoke after being hit by bombs

R.A.F. HEAVIES SMASH A JAP RAILYARD AT YE, IN BURMA : Tracks were torn up and rolling-stock wrecked in a recent attack by R.A.F. Liberators on the railway yard at Ye. This is a station at the end of the branch line running southwards along the coast from Pa-Naga, on the main line from Bangkok to Rangoon. In the above picture, a section of the track is seen completely wiped out as a result of the attack, with great craters marking the spots where the bombs fell



THE JAP PILOT AND HOW HE IS TACKLED BY AMERICAN AND AUSTRALIAN PILOTS IN THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC AREA. **"Our fighters, with their superb strength and power, grind the air clean. They skid down in formation, destroying everything that crosses their sights." In this drawing, the Allied attackers are Thunderbolts: the Jap planes are Nakajima Army fighters**—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

TACTICS Against the JAP PILOTS

And Other Flying Subjects Depicted by Sphere Artists

Characteristics of the Japanese pilot are something about which Allied air personnel around Australia are chary of generalising. Experiences have been so varied that no one is anxious to outline a universal pattern. But for all that, our pilots have encountered, from time to time, some recurrent types of Jap combat behaviour and tactics.

It is the experience of some pilots in this theatre of war that Japanese pilots are, mainly, "exhibitionists." On the few occasions during attacks on their aerodromes when they were able to get their fighters up into the air in time, the Jap pilots have behaved oddly. The most likely diagnosis has been that the Japs were "turning on a show." Below them on the ground were their own people and installations; the spectators were Japanese; the Japanese flyers had to put up a performance.

As a result, the Japanese have been greeting the Allied pilots with tactics resembling aerobatics. Zeros and floatplanes have been coming in at weird angles, twisting themselves in manœuvres, but never getting very dangerous. From the ground it probably looks spectacular. That is about all.

Over the past fifteen months the evidence is that Japanese fighter-pilot quality has deteriorated. It is a dangerous thing to say, but the experience of the Allied Air Arm suggests it.

No Lightning, Airacobra or Thunderbolt pilot dogfights with the Japanese. The Kittihawks, flown by Australians and Americans, come nearest to the dogfight. But fighter tactics from our side have changed. In a sense, they have become simpler. Our fighters, with their superb strength and power, grind the air clean. They skid down in formation, destroying everything that crosses their sights.

As can be guessed, the capabilities of the Japanese fighter pilot are no subject for generalisation. Their aircraft are not up to Allied aircraft if our pilots compel them to fight our way. Some of the Japanese are persistent and valorous; others follow the letter of an ancient book. But there seems no doubt that our flyers have got their measure. And there seems no reason to suppose that the situation will alter.

AN AMERICAN WARHAWK FLIES THE COLOURS OF ALL THE ALLIED AIR FORCES. This P-40 aircraft was the 15,000th fighter to be completed at the Curtiss-Wright plant at Buffalo: it is here being put through its tests just after coming off the assembly-line. This particular plane has been emblazoned with the insignia of all the twenty-eight air forces with which this type of fighter has been associated during the present war

***On left*—THE A-26 INVADER, a powerful new American all-purpose bomber.** This newest and fastest aircraft is now "seeing action" with the U.S. Army Air Force. It is twin-engined, and "has been designed to carry such an extremely flexible selection of machine-guns, cannon, bombs and fuel that its offensive striking power is expected to be adaptable to almost any combat situation"

A THIRTY-SEVEN MINUTES' INCIDENT IN THE AEGEAN : A Hellcat pilot is shot down, rescued and safely back aboard his aircraft-carrier in a rapid operation whilst on a bombing mission over the island of Melos—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

His aircraft hit by flak and set on fire, a Hellcat pilot baled out into the sea. Thirty-seven minutes later he was safely back on board his aircraft-carrier! The pilot had been on a bombing mission over the island of Melos: he was forced to bale out within range of the German coastal batteries. A Walrus amphibian at once took off to effect his rescue. While two other Hellcats flew around the spot where the British pilot was floating in his dinghy, a third went to meet the Walrus to lead it to the spot. Within thirty seconds of the Walrus' landing on the water, the distressed pilot was on board. When he baled out, flames enveloped his cockpit and, as he jumped clear, the pilot 'chute twisted round his legs and the main parachute failed to open. He dropped from 3,000 to 500 ft. before it did finally open. He was then jerked the right way up, and sustained a twisted knee—his only injury

Below—**TACTICAL ASSISTANCE BY ALLIED FIGHTER-BOMBERS welcomed by the troops in the Dutch battle zones**—*Drawing by Roland Davies.* During the tough fighting on the northern sections of the Western fighting zone—from the Maas to the Roer—the slow but steady forward movement of the Allied forces has been greatly stimulated by the Tactical Air Force. Weather has, of course, been the great hampering check. But whenever conditions have permitted, the air arm have been out, giving that aid which is especially appreciated by entrenched infantry. In many districts, a reversion to the old-fashioned 1914-18 trench warfare has come about. They are not comfortable trenches, and the sight of the Air Force giving visible aid has been a welcome sight. One correspondent wrote: "In the best flying weather for many a long day, the air arm everywhere gave great support to the infantry, knocking hell out of targets marked for them with smoke"

The "SOCIAL SIDE" in ITALY

And Pictures Taken During the Drive on the Town of Faenza

On right—As soon as a unit of the Guards comes out of the line for a rest, their Y.M.C.A. van appears on the scene to supply tea and cakes and such comforts as cigarettes, tobacco, pipes, Christmas-cards, etc. The mobile canteen is managed by Mrs. Lorna Twining, of Sloane Avenue, Chelsea, who formerly worked in a W.V.S. canteen near Victoria Station. After her husband, a Captain and Company Commander, was killed at Tebourba in April 1943, she applied for overseas service with the Y.M.C.A. She arrived in Algiers in June of that year and went on to Italy in January 1944. She has been with the Guards since before the attack on Cassino. Mrs. Twining serves farther forward, probably, than any other Englishwoman, and she shares many of the hardships of the men. She is a keen skier, and she hopes eventually to be able to indulge in this pastime when the Allied armies have advanced farther into Europe. Her husband was killed whilst serving with the Brigade to which Mrs. Twining is now attached.

THE GUARDS' Y.M.C.A. AND THE LONDON WOMAN WHO RUNS IT. Mrs. Lorna Twining, who comes from Chelsea, attends to the needs of Guardsmen just out of the line for a rest. The soldier on the right is the driver of the van which Mrs. Twining operates

FIELD-MARSHAL ALEXANDER ATTENDS A PARTY. In conversation with an American Lieutenant from Connecticut at the dinner

MISS BURKE IS BESIEGED by autograph hunters after her performance at the Florence Army Rest Camp

Recently a dinner was held in Italy to celebrate the Fifth Army victories in the Gothic Line: it was given by the South African and British troops of the Sixth South African Armoured Division to the American forces who fought on their right hand in the same battles, and to the U.S. First Armoured Division. The dinner was held at a British Army Rest Camp near Florence, and was attended by Field-Marshal Sir Harold Alexander. Among the entertainers was Miss Patricia Burke, now in Italy with E.N.S.A.

MISS PATRICIA BURKE, THE WELL-KNOWN STAGE AND SCREEN STAR NOW IN ITALY, singing to the troops during the Fifth Army celebrations near Florence. She was afterwards given a great ovation by officers and men attending the dinner

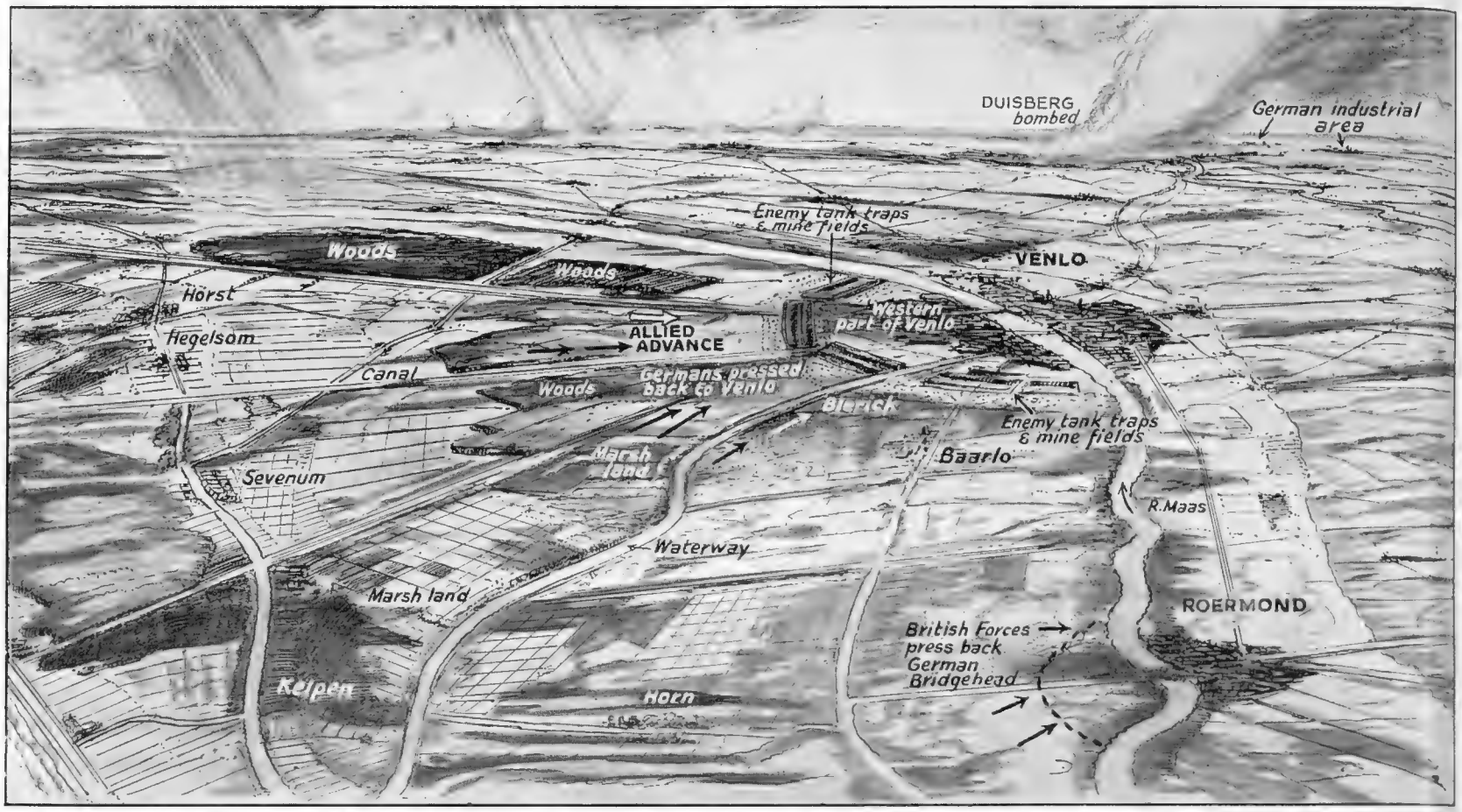
THE FIGHT CONTINUES TOWARDS FAENZA, AMID THE FOOTHILLS OF THE EASTERN APENNINES, where bad weather has been prolonging the struggle for Bologna and the Lombardy Plain. Infantry and tanks are here seen passing through a village south of the Forli-Faenza road on their way to the fighting front. In the background of the picture is a distant glimpse of the Plain and of the highway to Faenza—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

The enemy has been fiercely contesting the forward movement of the Allies around Faenza. The British drive on their section of the Lamone River was bitterly contested, as it threatened to cut the German defence system dangerously. Torrential rain had been falling for days. The patrols got across at Brisighella, Reda and other places; but the rapid rising of the rivers made it difficult to follow up the first forward movements. To the east, British troops met with terrific resistance from tanks and infantry, which had been reinforced by units driven off the hills by the Poles. Columns continued, in spite of the hampering weather, to occupy positions to the south-east and south-west of Faenza, by-passing the town and working westward in the direction of Bologna.

A SIEGFRIED LINE IN LITTLE: Part of the German defence works overcome by the Eighth Army in their advance to the city of Ravenna. When the Eighth reached the Lombardy Plain, they found obstacles—natural and artificial—which made their task almost as difficult as when they were in the mountains. Many rivers and canals, and stretches of land flooded by the enemy, were among the barriers they encountered. These were supplemented by anti-tank positions, strong-points and minefields. In addition to the defences built to stop our land forces, the Germans erected a series of strong-points to meet a possible invasion from the sea. The above picture was taken to the north of Cervia, and shows one of the big tank obstacles which our men overran in the advance towards Ravenna

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A LOG ROAD BY BRITISH ENGINEERS: Sappers and infantry digging a deep channel along the edge of the road to drain off the rain-water

THE "CORDUROY" ROAD BUILT OF LOGS before ballast had been spread over its surface to complete the job. A British Division, fighting on the Fifth Army front in the mountains before the Lombardy Plain, were caught during the advance by the bad weather. The last three miles of the road to their forward positions collapsed under the traffic and rains. The local rock is soft and is not fit for road surfacing, so the Royal Engineers have built a "corduroy" road—made from logs cut from the nearest wood—20 miles behind the line. Every available man in the Division has been put to work on the construction of this vital road. Rains running down the hillsides threatened to flood it, and deep drainage ditches were cut on either side of the track to prevent its collapse from this cause

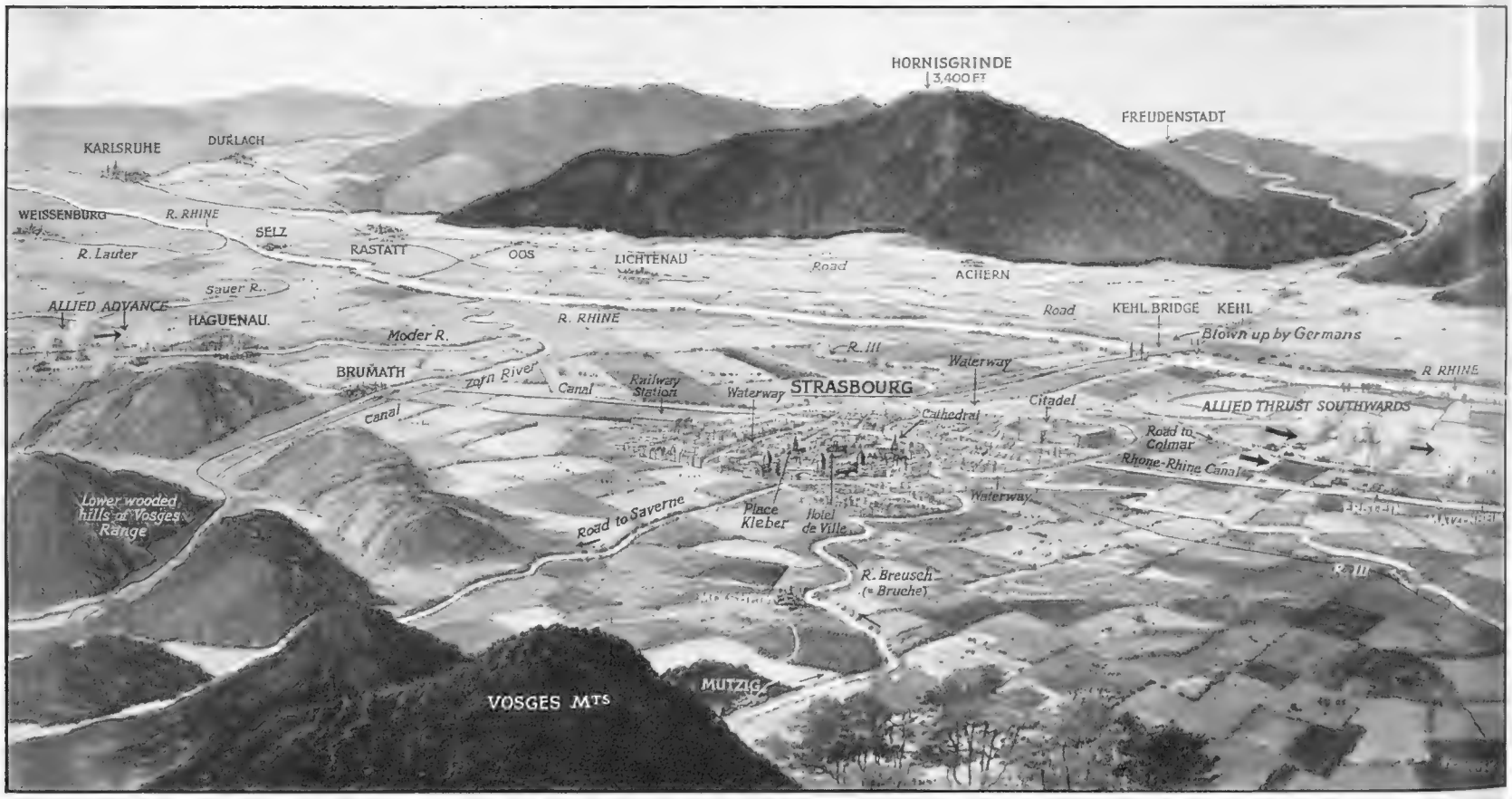


CRUSHING OUT THE MAAS "POCKET": THE BRITISH THRUST IN FRONT OF VENLO, the bastion town which guards the way into the vital industrial area of the Ruhr, in front of which the German resistance has, in consequence, been of the fiercest nature—*Drawing by Percy Home*

The clearing of the Germans from the Maas "pocket"—flat ground, seamed with canals and waterways running across marshy land on which no tanks could travel—was a difficult task. Every village and road crossing had to be fought for, yard by yard. The target for the Allies was the town of Venlo, which lies astride the Maas, now swollen with rains. On the farther shore, a few miles from the east bank of the Maas, lies German territory with roadways leading to the Essen industrial area. The British troops, in spite of the mud, fought their way forward to Wessen and Helder, reaching the river at a point beyond Wessen. Horn, a village facing Roermond, was also captured. Other columns advancing from the village of Amerika occupied Sevenum and Maasbree, a few miles west of Venlo. A captured village had to be held against prompt counter-attack. These advancing forces were coming up against huge minefields in front of Venlo. Tank ditches 25 ft. wide by 20 ft. deep loomed ahead. Blerick, a western suburb of Venlo, was however, eventually occupied. The Germans were reported to have blown up the road-and-rail bridge on the Maas at Venlo. The two castles of Warssum and Brockhuizen were occupied after a fierce burst of fighting. The Germans at Roermond were reported to be clearing out. Once across the Maas, the troops will find roads leading to Kempen, Crefeld and Duisdorf

FOUR-FOLD ATTACK on the GERMAN POSITIONS in the WEST

Diagram Drawings by *Sphere* Artists of the Four Main Fighting Areas Along the German Frontier

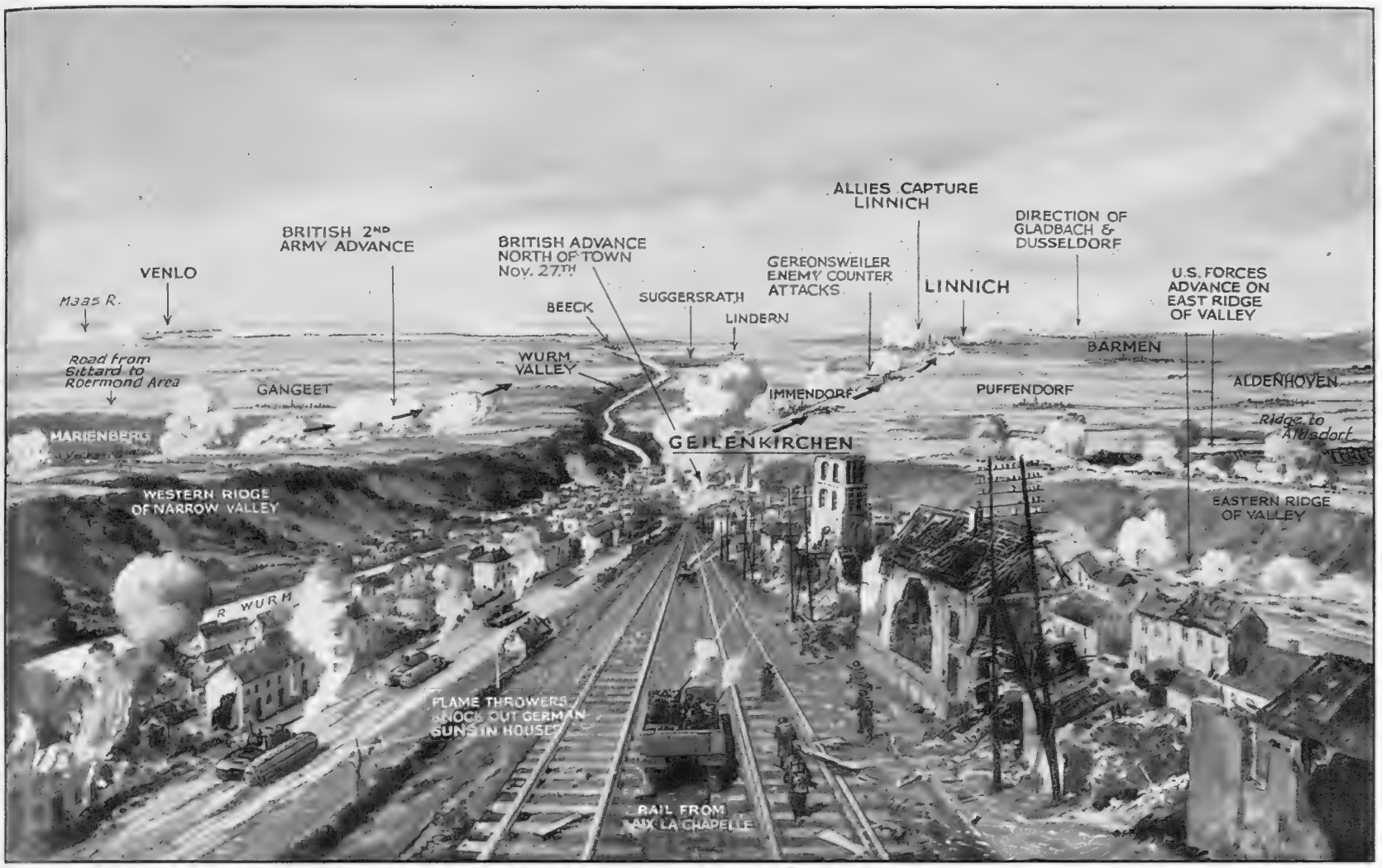


IN THE GREAT PLAIN OF ALSACE: THE CAPTURE OF STRASBOURG AND THE APPROACH TO THE KEHL BRIDGE OVER THE RHINE, now blown up by the Germans. The scene of operations as viewed from the Vosges Mountains above Molsheim—*Drawing by H. P. Burton*

When Strasbourg was captured on November 23, by the sudden and spectacular drive of French and American forces coming from Saverne, a corridor was formed cutting across the German forces holding Alsace. General Patch's Seventh Army has been busy widening this to the north and south. Mutzig and Molsheim, south-west of Strasbourg, were cleared on the 28th and Erstein, due south and near to the Rhine, on November 30. Finding themselves under very heavy pressure from the Americans, the Germans withdrew to Haguenau, due north of Strasbourg, to what they described as a new line. Haguenau lies in a rather dangerously open position on the road to Weissenburg, due east of Karlsruhe. It has, however, the protection of the Forest of Haguenau, and forests have proved to be very serious obstacles. The U.S. Seventh Army approached Haguenau from the south and west, and by December 1 were in a position to threaten it seriously, being only a mile or so distant.

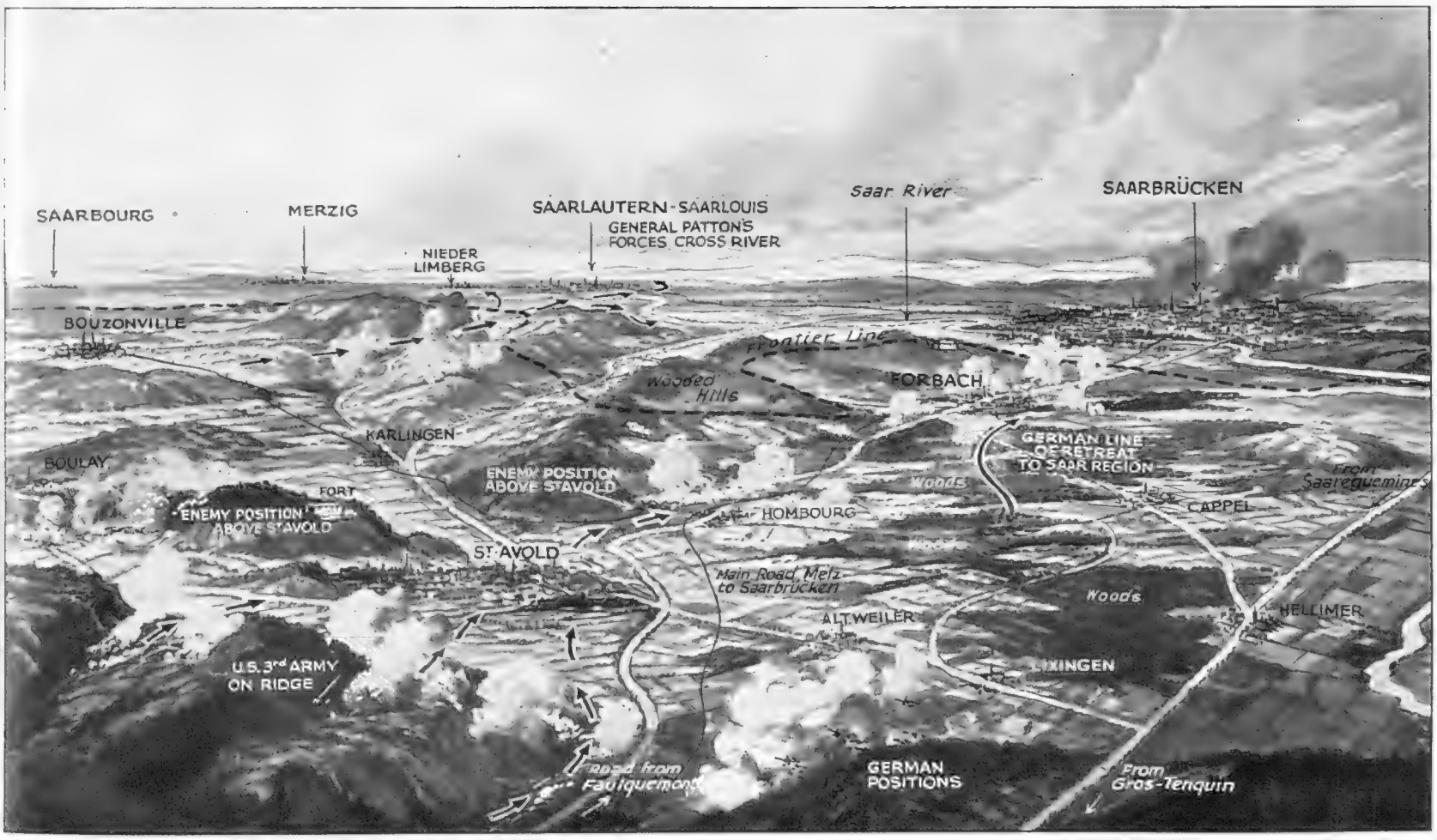
The bridges over the Rhine have been bombed many times, several being destroyed. Pontoon-bridges are not easy to maintain across the wide and swiftly-flowing Rhine, but there are still enough bridges across which the Germans have been slipping under cover of night.

After finally evacuating their remaining forces holding the west bank of the Rhine at Strasbourg, the Germans blew up all three bridges leading to the German town of Kehl on the other side of the Rhine, on December 2



THE ADVANCE TOWARDS THE RHINE: HOW THE TOWN OF GEILENKIRCHEN WAS CAPTURED BY A JOINT BRITISH AND AMERICAN OPERATION, and the Allied advance continued up the valley of the River Wurm, towards Linnich and the Dusseldorf region—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

Geilenkirchen, on the Wurm, was protected by a belt of fortifications, pill-boxes, wire, ditches and mines, with the 9th Panzer Division holding the city. Approached from the west by the British, and from the south by the Americans, Geilenkirchen was finally taken on November 19, when it was found that only about 300 people remained out of a population of 20,000. The town lies between the low cliffs formed by the Wurm Valley, which runs northwards towards the town—the U.S. troops pressing forward on the eastern ridge, as shown in the drawing given here. The British converged from the south and west, passing Marienberg on the western ridge of the valley. From Geilenkirchen the Allies fanned out north and east, towards the important town of Linnich, on the Roer, no great distance in mileage, but with villages every half mile to be surrounded and taken. Up in the north, beyond Geilenkirchen, there had been a long struggle to reach Beeck, and Lindern, which lay in part of the Siegfried Line which was still unbroken. The Americans had to approach a wide, anti-tank ditch, and pill-boxes over exposed ground, but they finally captured both Beeck and Lindern on November 30, after fierce fighting. Beeck was taken by drawing the German attention to an attack from the west while the main thrust came from the south, which took the Germans by surprise.



AFTER THE FALL OF METZ—THE ADVANCE TOWARDS THE SAAR BASIN: The freeing of the fortress city of Metz enabled the Allies to press on towards a notable target—the Saar, one of Germany's richest industrial centres. The general advance took the troops to the vicinity of St. Avold, a position held by the Germans in considerable strength: it is surrounded by wooded hills to the west, north and east. The Allied troops occupied the high ground to the west of St. Avold: after the capture of the latter, General Patton's Army was enabled to press on to the capture of Saarlouis, and thus directly threaten Saarbrücken, capital city of the Saar Basin. It is in this region that the industrial might of Germany is now being most seriously menaced, with the enemy forces on the retreat at many points

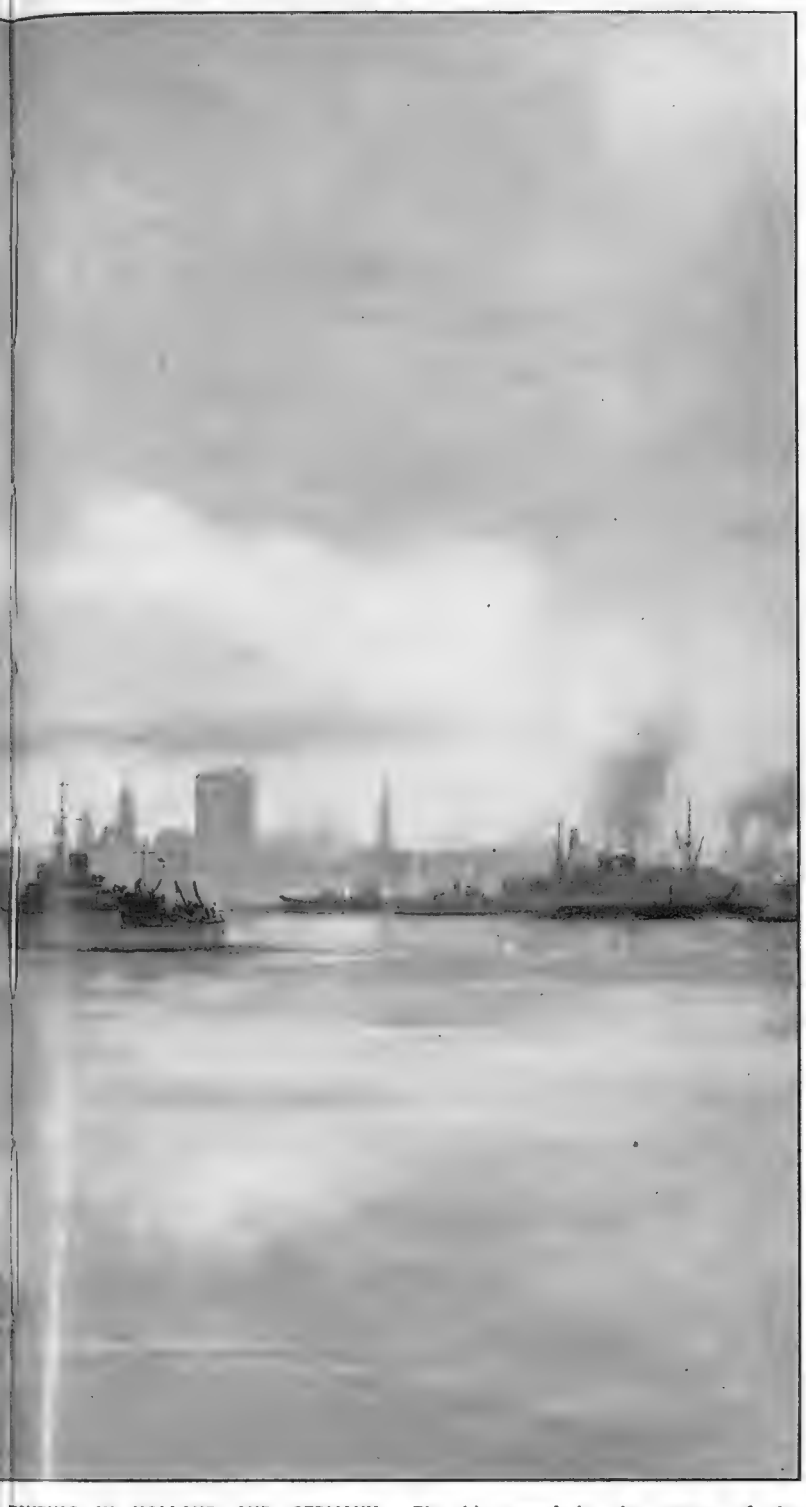
The FREEING of the PORT of ANTWERP

For the "Build-up" of the Allied Armies

ALLIED SHIPPING APPROACHING THE PORT OF ANTWERP WITH SUPPLIES FOR THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN ARMIES FGHT
drawing is a transport of some 20,000 tons : on the right is a Bangor class minesweeper (of 750 tons). In the background the Cathedral prominent in the centre—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

Whilst the last echoes of the German gunfire from Walcheren's battered sea-wall were fading away, Allied minesweepers were already at work, warily creeping up into the wide mouth of the River Scheldt and cutting a pathway for Allied shipping. Mr. Churchill made the fact known that the great Belgian port was open, in his speech to the House of Commons. He then referred to the work of forming a secure flank for the rest of the main armies to the eastwards. Big ships are now able to sail right up to the docks and quaysides of Antwerp and unload cargoes with ease and rapidity. Huge 150-ton cranes are awaiting them. The journey up the shining river is a remarkable experience. Sky and water seem to meet, as the clouds are reflected in the shimmering stretches of the river. The course winds from the wide mouth at Flushing and gradually narrows as the point at Walsoorden is reached. There the stream turns south-east and then one becomes aware of the silver-grey silhouette of the port and city rising over a distant line of silver. It is from this stretch of the river that Mr. Dawson's viewpoint is taken. The great, fretted spire of the Cathedral and the massive block of the skyscraper stores rise high over the lesser spires, turrets and roof-tops. There used to be a further swing due south before big ships tied up at the quays

DURING THE WORK OF CLEARANCE OF THE RIVER SCHELDT : British minesweepers in the harbour at Terneuzen at the end of the day's tasks. The river and its many channels were thickly strewn with mines by the Germans, although the port itself was captured too quickly for any extensive demolitions to be carried out by them in quay or dock



FGHTING IN HOLLAND AND GERMANY. The big vessel in the centre of the ound are the quays and docks of the great Belgian harbour, with the spire of

HELPING TO CLEAR THE SCHELDT OF ITS GERMAN MINES: Lieut.-Commander B. H. Fenwick rowing Lieut.-Commander E. O. Gidden in a rubber dinghy during their hazardous task. The former has been awarded the George Medal and Bar; and the latter holds both the George Cross and George Medal for participation in work of this dangerous nature

A GERMAN EXPLOSIVE MOTOR-BOAT found lying on a chassis at Flushing for transport overland. It is possible that the Germans intended to use this "secret weapon" against any Allied ships attempting to make the passage from the sea, up the Scheldt, to Antwerp

THE MINESWEEPING TASK IS FINISHED: The minesweepers are tied up side by side as the first Liberty ship sails past on its way into Antwerp. The Allied supply lines into Holland are now shortened by 200 miles: in peacetime, the port was capable of handling 80,000 tons a day. Shells, food, guns, transport and equipment are now flowing in for the reinforcement of the Allied armies

HOW THE FRENCH ENTERED THE ALSATIAN CAPITAL: Tanks of the Second Armoured Division, headed towards the Rhine, rumble through the streets of Strasbourg as the major part of the city fell to the French and American columns. When this picture was taken, fighting with the Germans was still going on in other parts of the town

AN ALLIED JEEP ROLLS PAST A GERMAN SIGN which had not yet been replaced by the French. Across the bridge can be seen other military vehicles, part of the Allied columns which made the first entry into Strasbourg

GETTING SOMETHING BACK FROM THE GERMANS: A SCENE NEAR THE FIGHTING AREA IN HOLLAND. From inside Germany and just across the border, Dutch women and children watched the bitter struggle for Geilenkirchen: but not all concentrated entirely on the fighting. Large numbers of cattle left behind by the fleeing civilians in the battle zone were roaming round the German fields: most of them had come from Holland, where they had been stolen. Dutch farmers were rounding them up under the supervision of the Allied authorities and herding them back across the border. "Never before in Europe have I seen such vast herds of lowing cattle as were gathered here," said one observer. "The fields for miles around were packed with them and more were coming in. There were fine pigs and sheep too. Some of the loot is coming back at last!"

—Drawing by Edward Osmond

BOTH ENDS of the WESTERN LINE

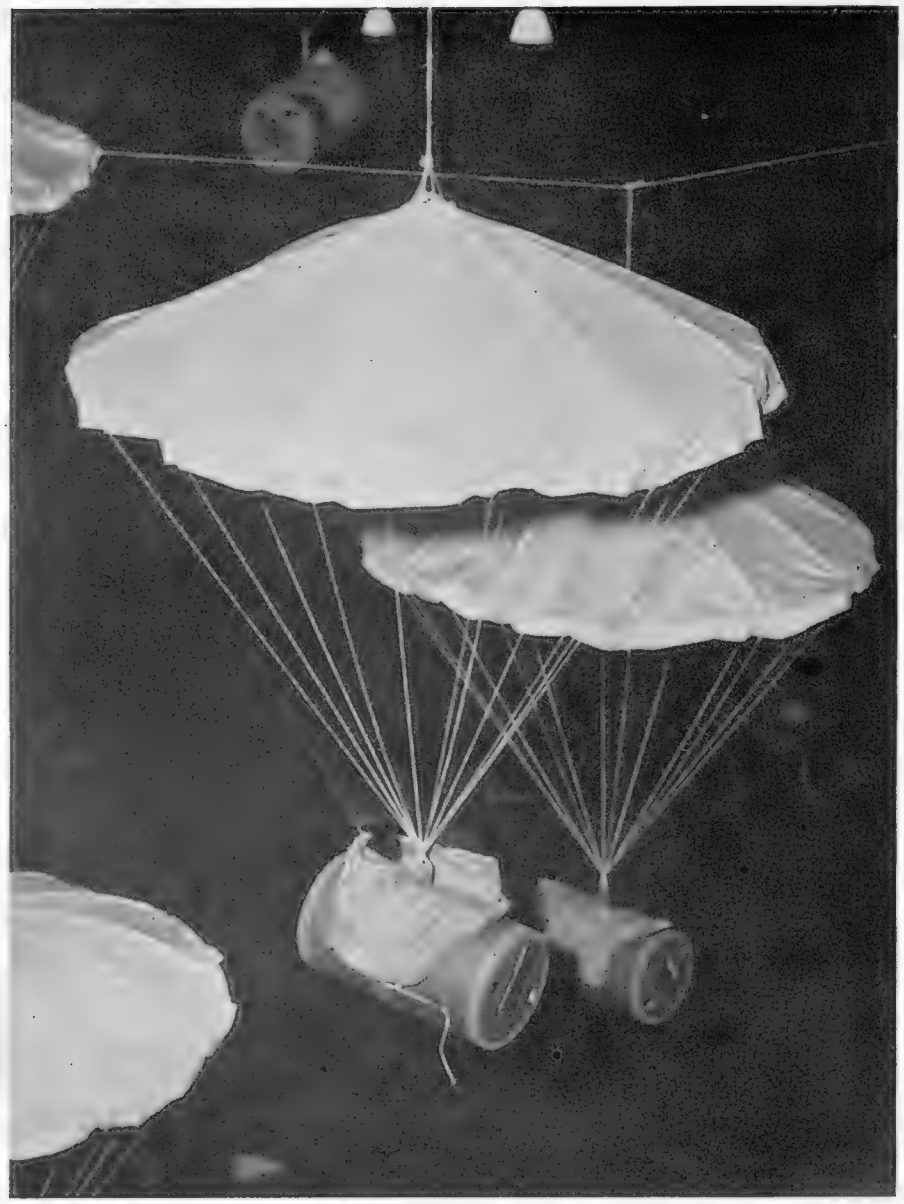
Two Special Sphere Pictures from Holland and from Alsace

On left — **THE ENTRY INTO STRASBOURG, picturesque and historic capital of Alsace**

—Drawing by W. G. Whitaker

A column of French colonial armour came hurrying up from the south as another American column came down the Vosges hill-slopes from the east, to meet in the streets of Strasbourg. Citizens went out to welcome them, and to watch the long lines of German prisoners passing through the streets. Strasbourg is a miniature Venice, so numerous are the linked rivers and canals, the Allied tanks came rumbling over the bridges joining street with street. Though, on a small-scale map, the city may appear to be on the Rhine, this is not so. It lies on the River Ill, which meanders over the Alsatian plain northwards, roughly parallel with the Rhine. The Ill penetrates the city and provides the waterways along which are built the old timber-fronted houses, with overhanging upper storeys, which make Strasbourg amongst the most romantic-looking cities of Western Europe. To-day the citizens are flying the flags of the Allies and doing their shopping in streets crowded with Army convoys. Even while the fighting was in progress, the inhabitants behaved almost as if the war were miles away and all danger past!

CLEARING THE ROAD TO VENLO AND TO THE GERMAN BORDER: In their advance to the River Maas, the Second Army found that the Germans had made a well-planned and orderly withdrawal, cratering all the main roads and leaving the whole area heavily mined. British sappers were immediately rushed up to fill in the craters and remove the mines; and here a party of them are seen at work at a cross-roads, where a particularly heavy demolition had been made by the Germans



HOW PIGEONS ARE DROPPED BY PARACHUTE: It is in such containers as these, suspended on parachutes, that the birds were sent down to the Maquis in France and to Allied agents in enemy-occupied territory

"WILLIAM OF ORANGE," dropped at Arnhem to the airborne troops, which then flew back with a message over a distance of 260 miles in just over four hours

THREE USES OF THE PARACHUTE

Dropping Lifeboats at Sea;

Dropping Supplies by Land;

Dropping Pigeons to Our Troops

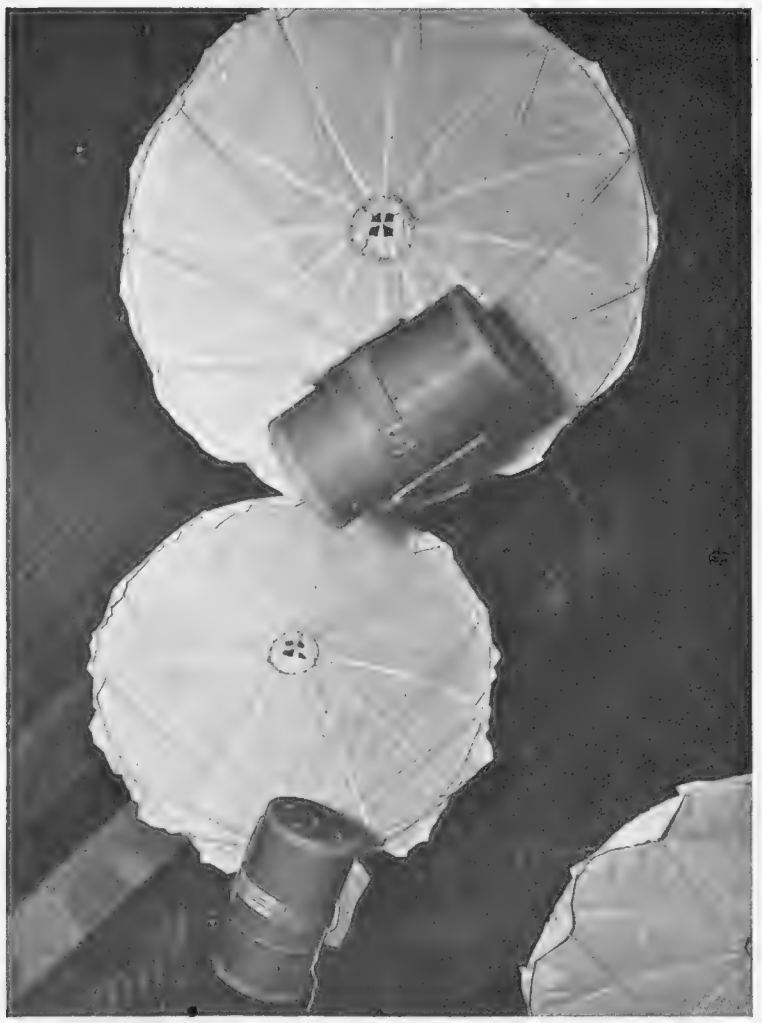
—New Pictures from Britain and the United States

HOW THE PIGEONS ARE PLACED IN THEIR SPECIAL CONTAINERS: A demonstration by a member of the Army Pigeon Service

Of more than 17,000 carrier-pigeons dropped into enemy territory during this war, only 1,700, or one-tenth, have reached home safely. Conditions have been such that, owing to the weather or to enemy action, these small heroes of the air were prevented from returning to their lofts in this country.

Many of the 1,700 which have survived were on show recently in London. These birds, bred by British civilian families in peacetime, have been trained under conditions of the strictest secrecy since 1941 by the Army Pigeon Service. One of them—"William of Orange" (of which a picture is given here)—brought a message from the airborne troops at Arnhem, a distance of 260 miles, in 4 hours 25 minutes.

Others had been dropped by parachute to the Maquis in France and to our agents in enemy countries. They have at various times brought back much valuable information, including the location of flying-bomb sites. After the show many of the birds were sold by auction in aid of the Royal Signals' War Memorial Fund



A CLOSE-UP FROM BENEATH OF THE SPECIAL CONTAINER AND PARACHUTE by means of which carrier-pigeons are dropped to the ground. The parachute, in particular, is of a carefully-thought-out design and it is a model of careful manufacture

A RECORD DROP OF SUPPLIES TO THE YUGOSLAV PARTISANS by aircraft of the R.A.F. Balkan Group. The greatest quantity of airborne supplies ever dropped to Resistance forces in the Mediterranean zone during a forty-eight-hour period was safely delivered to Marshal Tito's army in Yugoslavia recently by the R.A.F. Six hundred and sixty tons of supplies were delivered by nearly 500 aircraft. Heavy and medium bombers of an R.A.F. Group, placed at the disposal of the Balkan Air Force, contributed nearly 400 sorties to the total. The area chosen was a mountainous district, and the parachutes were mostly white in colour, to render the task of collecting them on the ground easier. For many months past, this has been a favourite method of delivering much-needed equipment to the Partisans fighting in difficult country in the heart of Yugoslavia

HOW THE AIRBORNE LIFEBOAT IS DROPPED FROM THE FLYING FORTRESS. It weighs over a ton, and it is supported by three parachutes, which are here seen beginning to unfold

THE LIFEBOAT AFTER IT HAS LANDED ON THE SEA. Alongside is the dinghy used by the airmen: the three parachutes are being salvaged after the men have clambered aboard

THE LIFEBOAT IS NOW READY to take the airmen to the nearest point of land. The sail assists the two small engines when the weather is favourable

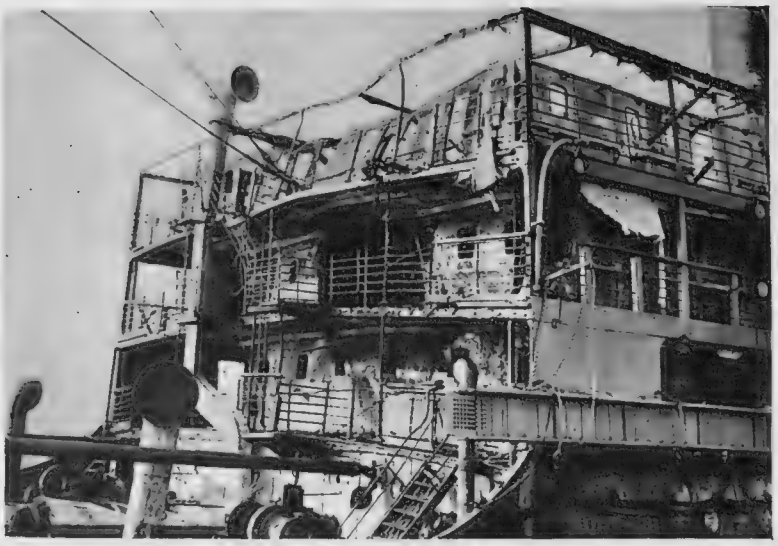
AFTER THE THREE PARACHUTES HAVE OPENED: Each one bears a similar strain, and the impact on landing is not too severe. The lifeboat touches the water right way up and is ready for almost instant use by the airmen after they have safely reached it

THE LARGE PARACHUTES SPREAD OUT ON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER READY FOR SALVAGING. Alongside the lifeboat is the dinghy in which they have been drifting. Note the two covered ends of the 27-ft.-long craft

A new and successful device in Air-Sea Rescue Service is a lifeboat that can be launched by parachute from a plane to airmen adrift on the sea out of reach of rescue launches. It has been developed by the Emergency Rescue Branch of the Personnel Equipment Laboratory at Wright Field, in Ohio, and is now in actual use by the Americans around their own shores and elsewhere.

The lifeboat itself is 27 ft. long and weighs 2,800 lb., or just over one ton: it is carried below the doors of the bomb bay of a B17 Flying Fortress. After it has been released three parachutes open out to carry it down—right way up—to the airmen in distress: these three parachutes afterwards submerge and then act as a sea anchor. The boat is powered with two 5 h.p. engines, and will sail at a speed of 8 miles per hour.

Canvas covers help to protect the occupants from bad weather, and a sail helps to speed the vessel in comparatively calm seas. The supplies carried in each boat assist the survivors during the passage to the nearest port. The pictures reproduced here show how the boat is dropped at the end of its three parachutes and the methods adopted by the rescued airmen after they have reached the lifeboat. Everything about the craft and its engines and its supplies has been very carefully thought out: the parachutes are of the finest quality and manufacture, and are frequently salvaged after the rescue. In all, there are no fewer than twenty water-tight compartments in the boat.

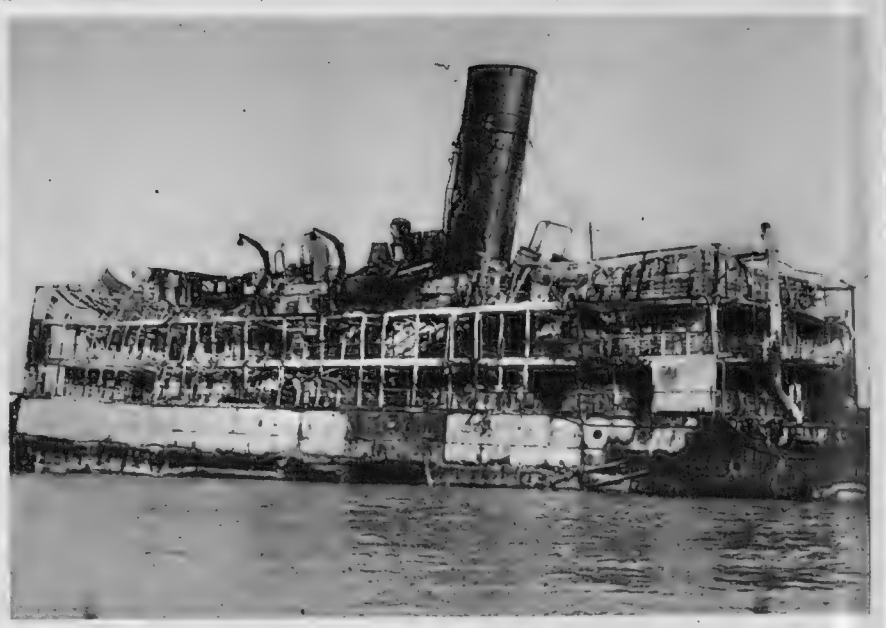


THE FIRST SHIP TO BE ATTACKED IN THE ENGLISH CHANNEL BY THE GERMANS : The wrecked decks and superstructure of the "Domala" in March 1940

PICTURES RELATING to the WAR from MANY DIFFERENT QUARTERS

—A Collection of News Items from the Channel to the Pacific Ocean

It has now been revealed that the British-India liner was bombed and set on fire in the Channel on March 4, 1940, whilst the vessel was carrying Indian subjects from Antwerp after their repatriation by the German Government. The Nazi aircraft which carried out the attack dropped four bombs, three of which struck the ship and set her on fire from stem to stern : 108 out of the 301 people on board were reported to be "missing, believed killed." Survivors escaping in lifeboats and rafts were machine-gunned by the attacking aircraft



HOW THE NAZIS LEFT THE BRITISH-INDIA LINER "DOMALA" after they had bombed it and set it on fire in March 1940 in the first attack made by them on a ship in the English Channel

BEAUFIGHTERS OF THE BALKAN AIR FORCE strike at the German escape routes in Yugoslavia. A salvo of rockets smashing into a bridge at Gorica, while other rockets are on their way to add to the damage

ROCKETS FROM ANOTHER SOUTH AFRICAN BEAUFIGHTER striking the other end of the bridge at Gorica : Rocket-firing aircraft have been playing a large part in the cutting of the German escape routes out of Yugoslavia. Many enemy vehicles are on the move northwards, attempting to escape from the traps which the Partisans under Marshal Tito—aided by British troops and the Balkan Air Force—are setting for them

THE FIRST W.A.A.F. TO ARRIVE IN INDIA : The girls, in tropical kit, march smartly along the dockside after disembarking, watched by Indian dock labourers. The first contingent of 500 officers and airwomen of Britain's Women's Auxiliary Air Force have arrived in India, to work alongside the men of the R.A.F. in the war against the Japanese. They are all volunteers, and will serve in South-East Asia Command doing medical, electrical, motor transport, plotting and many other jobs which will release men for other work. The W.A.A.F. already have a splendid record of overseas service in many theatres of war

THE R.A.F. REGIMENT IN NORTHERN GREECE : An armoured car on patrol outside Salonika, with a background of wrecked rolling-stock destroyed in air attacks. Units of the regiment have recently been operating north of Salonika not far from the Bulgarian border. They have played a notable part in the Greek campaign, assisting the ground forces, with armoured cars and personnel, to harass the retreating Germans

ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING OF RECENT RADIO PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE EASTERN WAR, taken during the fighting in the Budapest sector. It shows a spotter's view of the effect of intensive mortar-fire carried out by a Guards unit of the Red Army upon the German and Hungarian lines. The mortar batteries and artillery of the Russians have played a dominating part in the campaign: it was mainly owing to the latter that the Battle of Stalingrad—the great turning-point of the war in the east—was won

THE RED ARMY IN THE CARPATHIANS: The tank crew of a Guards unit manœuvre their fighting vehicle into position in the hills. This unit played a considerable part in the great Battle of Stalingrad and has been following the German Army westward ever since

THE CROSSING OF THE RIVER DANUBE: Red Army officers examine a pontoon bridge thrown across the wide stream by Soviet sappers (particularly adept at this work) to replace the permanent structure destroyed by the Hungarians during their headlong retreat

ON THE ISLAND OF LEYTE, IN THE PHILIPPINES, AS THE AMERICAN INVASION GOT WELL UNDER WAY: An aerial view of the beachhead at Dulag on D-Day plus three, showing landing craft pouring supplies ashore to back the attack of the ground troops who had hacked out the landing-place. Hundreds of tons of supplies are stacked along the shore ready to feed the men and guns and to help wipe out the Japs: thousands of the latter have been exterminated, and a Provisional Government is now administering the reconquered territory under American supervision

A LINK BETWEEN THE SOLDIER AND HIS HOME

What the Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association is Doing to Overcome the Home Worries of Our Fighting Men

Described by CHARLES GRAVES

PARTLY because of the greater vision of the military authorities, partly because of air raids, and partly because of the difficulty of giving home leave to our troops overseas, the British Serviceman of to-day is treated with infinitely more consideration than was common in the last war. In the last war, pilots were allowed to continue operations when they were suffering acutely from flying stress. In the last war, too, we had 50,000 casualties a day for weeks on end. This time, a combination of common sense at a high level and public opinion, does not permit such things to happen to-day. It is this combination which has enabled S.S.A.F.A. (The Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association) to do the work for which it was intended in 1885 and was never really permitted to carry out until the present war.

S.S.A.F.A. stands to-day for one thing that matters most to the fighting man—the unbreakable link between him and home. It looks after his family while he is away, and by metaphorically "going into action" at his side, keeps him always in touch with home. Army welfare suffers from the strangulation of too many Army Council Instructions. S.S.A.F.A., although recognised by the Government, and even partially subsidised by the Treasury, is allowed to be much more human.

"We'll look after them" is the motto of the Association, and the motto is lived up to in dozens of different ways, such as: filling up forms for official allowances, and giving grants and loans where there is delay; filling up forms for the War Service Grants Advisory Committee, and giving grants until the extra allowances come through; helping with maternity fees and expenses; arranging for expectant mothers to go to maternity homes; finding and paying for help when the mother is ill; caring for children in emergency Rest Homes or in temporary local Homes when the mother is in hospital; obtaining legal advice, and sometimes paying for it; asking for a reduction in rent, rates and hire-purchase payments; paying off arrears of the above to straighten out family budgeting; filling up forms for free milk; helping with doctors' bills; issuing food tickets for extra nourishment; giving clothes, boots and blankets; issuing coal tickets; and in many similar ways.

S.S.A.F.A. representatives are experts in all the problems which suddenly confront the serving man's wife when she finds herself alone for the first time and responsible for the home and family. The Overseas Service, opened three years ago at the request of the Army Welfare Department, handles inquiries from men serving overseas about their families at home, and from families at home who are inquiring about their men overseas. The inquiries from the men about their families can be broken down into three categories: 45 per cent. are to do with matrimonial worries; another 45 per cent. are miscellaneous domestic problems connected with housing, compassionate postings, illness, death, wills, paying allowances; the remaining 10 per cent. are concerned with the problem of children.

Any member of the three fighting Services can go to one of the overseas branches which are now open all over the Middle East from Malta and Naples to Lahore. Similar branches are available still farther East.

A typical request last week was a cable from an airman in Colombo who wanted visual verification of his decree absolute granted as long ago as January 1939. He wanted to marry again, and S.S.A.F.A. went to Somerset House and, having seen the decree absolute with their own eyes, duly cabled confirmation. Another typical query from the Middle East was about a soldier's brother who had become a paying guest in his home during his absence. The soldier was afraid that the brother was alienating his wife's affections. The S.S.A.F.A. representative was compelled to admit that the soldier's fears were well grounded. "It is quite true," the representative reported, "the mother has become expectant." A sergeant in the Middle East whose wife was charged with infanticide succeeded, through S.S.A.F.A., in reaching London within five days of S.S.A.F.A.'s presentation of his case to the authorities. Incidentally, though the wife was acquitted, the husband refused to have anything more to do with her. But, on the whole, it is S.S.A.F.A.'s happy experience that, though many men jump to conclusions about their wives, a high percentage forgive them and adopt the children born in their absence.

S.S.A.F.A. occasionally answers problems somewhat outside the normal run of domestic drama. A sapper in a jungle Field Regiment asked for information about the aims of all the political parties in the country to-day. This was duly provided for him, including the aims of the Communist Party. The three Service Ministries make increasing use of S.S.A.F.A. representatives in the United Kingdom to obtain confirmation of home circumstances upon which applications have been made for compassionate leave, transfer nearer home or temporary release. In such cases, the Association acts in a purely advisory capacity in the same way that it never provides Servicemen with information which would be grounds for divorce. If there is a query about the fidelity of a wife, the representative will see the woman, ask her for a signed statement, but make no attempt to cross-examine her.

The Overseas Department alone has grown from a staff of two to 200. Over 13,000 letters, cables and telegrams are dealt with each week. Of these, over 1,700 represent new inquiries with reference to men. And this is without taking into account the Twenty-First Army Group figures, which are not available.

To all intents and purposes, the Association is a part of the machinery of the Navy, Army and Air Force, and Field-Marshal Alexander has written to say that nothing affects the morale of the troops serving overseas more acutely than the preoccupation of family worries. A similar message was received from the Adjutant-General, Home Forces.

Particularly when a man is serving abroad or far away from his home, the non-arrival of mail from his family, or the receipt of distressing news about the illness of his wife or children, can create a feeling of intense depression. It was to deal with these home troubles that the Overseas Department was created, especially in connection with inquiries arising from heavy air raids. Soon, as I have described, it developed into a much wider service. At present, the Association is spending £250,000 a year, which is much more than its income, in spite of the fact that practically every one of the 20,000 employees is working voluntarily. Funds permitted, it could easily spend £500,000 a year in a constructive way and without any waste. One of its chief activities is the supply of clothing through its 300 depots.

Again, since the war began, over 7,000 letters from prisoners of war in Germany have reached their destinations in this country through the Association's "dead-letter" office. These are letters insufficiently addressed or whose rightful owners have moved perhaps several times and are quite untraceable through the normal Post Office channels. These apparently undeliverable letters are sent in batches of 100 to the S.S.A.F.A. Headquarters at 23, Queen Anne's Gate, S.W.1. With the help of representatives all over the country, nearly all these letters finally reach their destination.

S.S.A.F.A. owns 8 acres of ground and seventy-nine flats at Wimbledon where widows and unmarried daughters of deceased officers are accommodated rent free if their income is less than £200 a year. Unmarried daughters of dead officers are also helped with their rent, while temporary grants in cases of distress arising out of medical expenses and rent arrears are also made. Primarily, however, S.S.A.F.A. is for Other Ranks

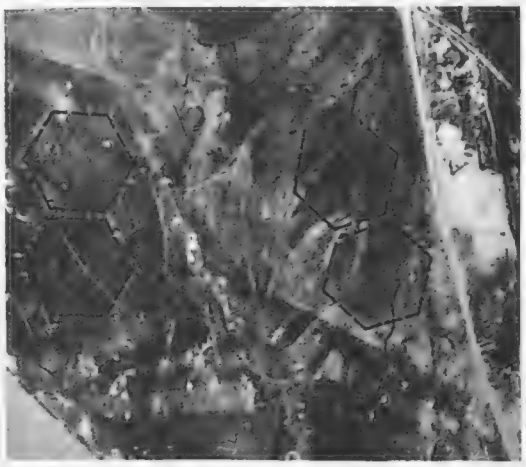
Heavy though the expenditure is during the war, it is likely that the demands will be even greater after the armistice. The work on reconstruction and the rehabilitation of families is bound to be enormous, and every effort will be made to see that the Government's pledge of houses, food and work is honoured. The inadequacy of housing accommodation is serious enough at the moment, but it is bound to be a good deal worse after the war. The return of large numbers of men from overseas will necessitate considerable readjustment of home life. Vast numbers of families will return to their own home districts from which they have been evacuated because of war conditions; others, under the Town and Country Planning Scheme which I described last week, will have to find homes in the new cities and towns now being visualised. In all this, S.S.A.F.A. will be invaluable. Having begun with the limited idea of dispensing charitable grants, it has developed into the much wider field of welfare, and its representatives are looked upon as friends and advisers by Servicemen's families throughout the country. It is a pity that the Treasury cannot allocate more than £10,000 a year towards its work.

WHEN GERMANY WAS PREPARING FOR INVASION IN 1940

HOW THE NAZIS KEPT WATCH ON BRITAIN: "A new road under construction north-west of Portsmouth"

"TANK TRAPS AND ROAD OBSTACLES on the coast and covered trenches near South Lancing, in the Worthing district"

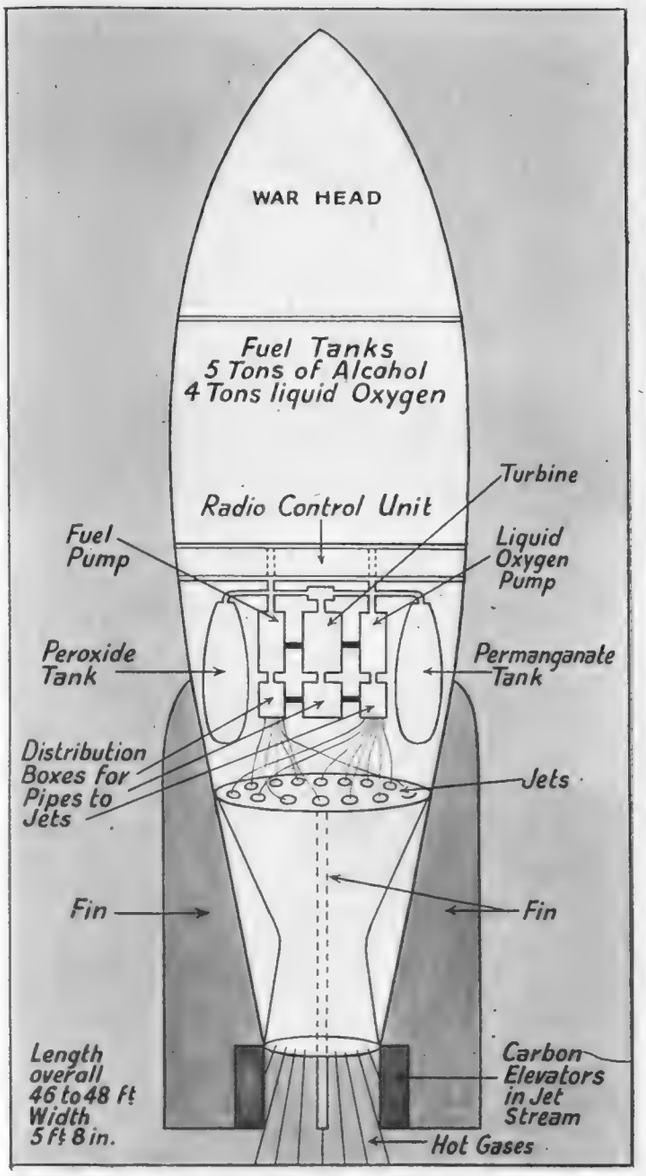
AN OLD FORT NEAR CHATHAM surveyed from the air by the German Luftwaffe



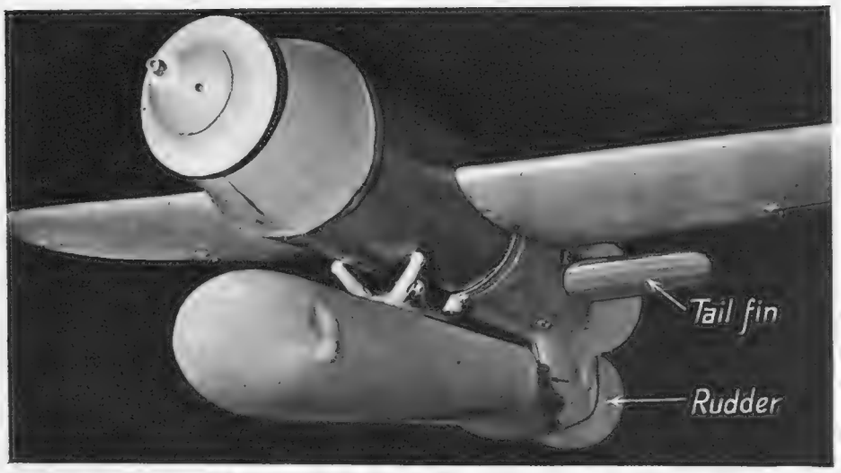
MINEFIELDS LAID IN A HONEYCOMB PATTERN north of Dungeness, on the English south coast

These pictures are reproduced from a German manual on the Invasion of England: they are proof that in 1940 the Germans were in deadly earnest in their plans to invade Britain. As will be seen, their espionage system and their thoroughness were such that coast defences and strong-points were known and marked on the photographs. These pictures were contained in a book entrusted to higher officers of the German Services. When the British entered Brussels, they captured a number of these manuals

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this publication should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export



HOW THE V 2, OR ROCKET SHELL, IS CONSTRUCTED: a drawing which shows its various parts. It was made after an inspection of many parts of a wrecked shell found in Belgium (*See note at right*)



THE GERMAN "GLIDER BOMB." This is the type of missile which the Germans have been using from some of their specially-equipped aircraft in attacks on Allied shipping at sea. It is controlled by radio by the pilot after release. This specimen was found, ready packed for transport, near Paris, where it was recently placed on view

ROCKET SHELLS and FLYING BOMBS

More about the German V (or Vengeance) Weapons Used Against England

On left—The V 2 is believed to have an overall length of 46-48 ft., and to be about 5 ft. 8 in. in diameter. It weighs something like 15 tons, of which only about one ton is explosive warhead. For fuel the shell carries 5 tons of alcohol and 4 tons of liquid oxygen: these are used in the jet-propulsion unit which provides the missile with its terrific speed through the stratosphere. The radio-control unit operates when the rocket has reached a height of some 10 miles; and then serves to turn the shell towards its destination

SOME OF THE V 2 PARTS ARE VERY WEIGHTY: Here are the turbo pumps. On the left is the fuel pump, and on the right is the liquid-air pump, with its distributor just in front. In the centre is the turbine; in the front may be seen the mixture line for power to the turbine. This line is wrapped round with asbestos to guard against the varying temperatures encountered during the rocket's flight—cold in the stratosphere and heat during the earthward plunge

Below—**THE FIRST PICTURE OF THE AMERICAN FLYING BOMB READY FOR USE: this is the U.S. version of the German V 1.** If needed, this powerful missile is ready for use against its inventors—the Nazis. This first picture shows a close-up of its launching cradle at an undisclosed testing ground of the U.S. Air Technical Service Command. The bomb was reconstructed in thirty days, fragments of German bombs found in England being used as models. Its launching ramp is claimed to be an improvement over the German model. It can be built in four days, whereas the Nazis' requires two weeks to construct

NEW LAMPS and OLD

A Fortnightly Causerie on Life and Letters

By JOHN GORE

THE MELTING-POT OF EUROPE.—A friend, whose opinions are always trenchant, often sound and constantly give me food for thought, took some time off the other day to look into the stew-pot of Europe, examine the simmering component gobbets, and assess the difficulties in the way of settling the European hash on a firm and equitable basis. He passed on to me some of his reflections and conclusions; and I don't pretend that I subscribe to all his findings and riders.

He did not touch on the patent and Gigantic Snag—to do so were impiety, if not gross imprudence. I refer to the enormous gulfs which separate the great and friendly deciding Powers from a common and united peacetime policy and purpose, their distances from each other and from the scene, and the relative power and influence which each can put behind her own proposals for resettlement. And he did not assume that the New League would in our time solve the problem of maintaining permanent peace. Rather, my friend, a student of European history, allowed himself a wandering commission across Europe, and back over European history.

His notes are random notes and I have done nothing to rearrange them:

"Have you struck the curious ethnological fact that you could take nearly all the countries and cut them horizontally and throw away the southern half without affecting much their general value?

"An Italian told me long ago that if you could cut the leg of Italy across at about the level of Rome, and throw away the lower part, it would be a much better country. I know that if you cut Ireland across on the level of Dublin, and threw away the lower half, it *would* be a much better country. And if you cut England across on about the level of the Thames and Bristol you would lose quite a lot of nice, easy-going people in the south, and, of course, some very pretty country; but England, as England, would not be any the worse off. Cut France across at the Loire and throw away all the Mediterranean and you would have a really decent country. If you did much the same with Spain and kept the Navarese and the Aragonese and the Basques, and threw away the Andalusians and the other southerners, you would again have a better country."

My correspondent could hardly expect me, a Sussex man, to subscribe to his partition of England. Of Spain and Italy, I know, ethnologically, very little. Of France, I should think twice before I accepted his sweeping assertion.

The Little Nations.—"Now about rats forsaking the sinking ship. I do not think it fair to jibe at Rumania and Bulgaria and Hungary. What chance in hell have they had of getting out of the German clutches? I said long ago (at least ten years ago) that the hardest fate for any small nation in a European war is to be the ally of Great Britain. It always means being overrun by the enemy, whoever the enemy may be. We do our best to compensate them afterwards, but they go through hell till we do." [*And often (I add) our "compensation" stores up for them another and worse hell.*]

"Look at Yugoslavia in the past and present war; or Belgium. Look at Holland in this war. Even to remain neutral a small country must have some special qualifications, as had Sweden, Switzerland, Spain—in each case physical or geographical conditions. One might add Turkey, but there there were political considerations as well. Turkey was, and is, more afraid of Russia than of Germany, but neither country could have afforded troops for the invasion of Anatolia, even if she had wished to do so, which is not proven.

. . . . . .

"The one thing which surprised me about Rumania was the way their troops fought when they were dragged in under the Germans. The Rumanian, as we know him, the townsman and the so-called nobility, is not the highest of God's creatures. Carol's brother, Prince Nicholas, who is very intelligent and very amusing, and, I believe, quite a good soldier, at any rate as an ordinary Staff Officer, told me that the Rumanian peasant, especially from the Carpathians, who has little of the Roman taint or the Levantine strain in him, is a very fine fighting man.

"If you happen to be short of a subject some time, you might explain any conceivable method by which the people of Rumania or Bulgaria or Hungary could have got out of the war if they had wanted to. Or, for the matter of that, you might explain how the people of *Germany* could have avoided it if they had wanted to."

Here, with a vengeance, are a cluster of sweeping assertions, for which I accept no responsibility beyond saying that I fully admit the difficulties which in a total war face the small nations whose chief desire is to keep out of trouble. But Greece and Yugoslavia found a harder and more honourable way than did Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary, and no one is going to persuade me that they did not have an eye on the main chance of territorial loot from their neighbours.

Compensation.—"Another entirely dissociated subject—how are we going to compensate our assorted gallant allies? Somebody had the courage in print the other day to say that if we gave any part of Germany to the Danes, for example, we should merely be sending to the Danes a lot of anti-Danish Germans. It would be the same thing as when we compensated the Serbs by giving them chunks of Hungary and the damn-fool frontier line which left a lot of Serbs in Hungary and planted a lot of Hungarians in Serbia. I think that I did tell you, a long time ago, a remark of a friend of mine who lived for years in Belgrade, when I asked him why they did not sort them out and send the Serbs back into Serbia and the Hungarians back into Hungary. His reply was: 'But, my dear Sir, if you did that there would be no minority to massacre.' We are stacking up exactly the same trouble all over again in Transylvania."

There are still larger snags in this question of "compensation" on which he does not touch. That "compensation" stores up a worse hell for small nations than the hell for which it compensates I have already said, and this is a problem to be borne in mind when compensation for Poland, Holland, Denmark, and other small nations—not to mention France—is considered.

The snarling Balkans are for ever a microcosm of the seething-pot of Europe, and a readjustment of the gobbets by Great Powers, with long spoons or shorter spoons, and perhaps with guiding principles less or more altruistic, and with no mutually-accepted equality of authority in decisions, is indeed a problem which may well daunt the builders of a brave new world and the architects and optimists of lasting Security and Peace.

THE GIRLS WHO MAN THE BOATS: For the past three years W.R.N.S. ratings have manned most of the Navy's duty-boats, some as large as 60-ft. long. They have been at the wheel of vessels plying between ship and shore in all weathers and at all hours, bringing men ashore for leave and taking mail and stores to ships in the anchorages. The girl seen at the wheel here is the daughter of a Mullion Cove fisherman: she has handled boats almost since she could walk

A Hornets' Nest.—I enjoy this page of mine in THE SPHERE. It gives me an opportunity once a fortnight to range over a wide variety of subjects—"light articles only," for choice. For the older I grow, the more I seek peace and grow bored with contention and bitterness.

Yet once in a way it is interesting to use it as a forum for the views of other men, who have ideas and hobby-horses to exercise. But I would not say that the experiment saves me trouble—far from it. It is safer and more comfortable to talk of cabbages than of kings, and of sealing-wax than of capital ships. But I do not know that a journalist ought always to avoid "trouble," although undoubtedly he should try to restrict his comments to the narrow field of matters of which he has some knowledge and experience. This field, of European resettlement, with its vast expanse sown thick with tares, is one which angels should fear to tread. Stalin, Churchill, Roosevelt, de Gaulle, Eden, Molotoff, and so on, no doubt see the problem larger and see it perhaps whole, which cannot be said of enthusiastic amateurs who, from experience of one corner, rush in with advice or trenchant pronouncements. Yet even those who see it largest and know the most, cannot in the circumstances view it from the same angle of vision; and I fancy it is true that no great problem has ever been settled without the contributions of private men and enthusiastic amateurs.

In this belief, I have ventured out of my depth (and beyond my brief) on this page for once in a way, and I have quoted opinions on matters beyond my own purview or knowledge. And I hope my Christmas holiday, to which I look forward, may not be enjoyed in a hornets' nest of "trouble."

The New London Stage Productions

Reviewed by PHILIP PAGE

SHAW REVIVALS (Lyric, Hammersmith).—I wonder that when Shaw decided to put Shakespeare into a play, as he has in *The Dark Lady of the Sonnets*, he was not ruder about him. And funnier. For I imagine this little piece, which also introduces Queen Elizabeth, was to a large extent intended to be funny. I thought it rather dull, in spite of some good acting by Mr. Nigel Clarke as the Bard, Miss Margaret Halstan as the Queen and Miss Patricia Hilliard as the Dark Lady.

Village Wooing, which followed, revives much better, and is far more entertaining. Miss Ellen Pollock and Mr. Michael Golden did grand things with it.

The Magistrate (St. Martin's).—Time does indeed pass. There can be few playgoers nowadays who remember the last revival of this really rollicking farce by Pinero, since it took place at the long-vanished Terry's Theatre in 1892. At the St. Martin's, playgoers of all ages can, and should, see this true masterpiece of fun in its original state. Mr. Denys Blakelock as Mr. Poskett gives the best performance of his career so far (and that says a good deal), and the rest of the company is on an extraordinarily high level, Miss Helen Cherry, Miss Avice Landone and Mr. David Bird being particularly excellent.

THE LUNTS AND THEIR NEW ENGLISH PLAYWRIGHT: Alfred Lunt (on left), Terence Rattigan (centre) and Lynn Fontanne (Mrs. Lunt). Mr. Rattigan's new play, *Love in Idleness*, was presented by the Lunts at the Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool, on November 27. It is due for production in London on December 20

ROBERT DONAT PRESENTS HIS FIRST PANTOMIME: At St. James's Theatre on December 22, Mr. Donat is presenting "an unusual pantomime," by Herbert and Eleanor Farjeon, *The Glass Slipper*. It is a Cinderella story, but without the usual pantomime conventions. In this picture the dance producer, Andree Howard, is demonstrating some steps whilst Robert Donat and William Armstrong (producer) look on

Sadler's Wells Opera (Princes).—London has been without grand opera for some little time. The return of the Sadler's Wells people to Central London I found most welcome, since they opened their season with two one-act operas by Puccini which are comparatively unfamiliar—*Gianni Schicchi* and *Il Tabarro*. Both, of course, are good, but the former is exquisite, both musically and as a subtle and truly amusing little comedy. It received the fine performance it deserves.

THE EQUIPMENT OF A BRITISH PARACHUTIST

And How it is Carried When Making a Jump

1—WHAT THE PARACHUTIST CARRIES ON HIS BACK—a picture taken after the parachute harness has been discarded. The latter would be thrown off as soon as the man lands

Upper left—Here the parachutist is wearing the rimless steel helmet (worn by *all* airborne troops), with its special strap to prevent possible choking. The face-veil, here worn as a scarf, is camouflage-painted, and can be pulled up to break the line of the face; it can be worn thus while keeping full observation. On his back is the small pack, in which can be seen a light mortar, much used for laying smoke-barrages, and a ground-sheet. Suspended below the pack is an entrenching tool; and below that can be seen the corner of the lightweight respirator, which, when worn, goes on to the face complete, not needing to have the case close by. The rope is carried by almost all parachutists, and is called a toggle rope: it is useful in fording rivers, climbing steep banks and maintaining touch in night work. The parachutist's overall coat is known as the Denison smock

Upper right—Note the four large outside pockets in the smock (plus two large ones inside) and the zip-fastener on the front. The smock has a flap on its lower rear edge, which buttons up on the studs on the lower *front* edge of the smock (passing between the legs). The smock is put on over the head: it is very warm and takes the place of a greatcoat on operations. The bulge in front of the battledress trousers is made by an *extra* pocket worn on the outside. This, chamois-leather lined, can be used for maps, etc. To release himself, all that the parachutist has to do is to turn the wheel on his Quick-Release Box, which unlocks *three* lugs. Then, simply by striking the wheel, these three lugs drop clear and permit a quick release of the Δ-shaped metal clips which, at present, they secure. The fourth lug and its Δ-shaped attachment is permanently attached to the box, which is tested to hold (as are all metal parts) several tons

Lower left—In this front view, the following points should be noted: the special airborne helmet, with its distinctive chin-piece; the face-veil; toggle rope; Denison smock—note the large pockets at the lower edge; binoculars; mortar bombs in the basic pouch at right; bandolier with fifty rounds of small-arms ammunition (·303); and the handle of the fighting knife

Lower right—The parachute is of the Statochute type, in which the man hooks up a stout linen line to a strong-point in an aircraft; when he jumps, the parachute is by this means automatically pulled out of the brown bag on his back. The man is wearing a Denison smock which, camouflaged and with six large pockets, carries his personal gear. *All* airborne troops have this. The helmet is of the standard rimless type used by all airborne troops: the strap carries on it a chin-piece, which prevents the helmet being whipped off the wearer's head when he is struck by the slipstream of an aircraft, and also eliminates any danger of his being choked. The handle of a fighting knife can just be seen

2—THE EQUIPMENT IS HERE COVERED COMPLETELY beneath the man's smock. Over all are the straps of the parachute, with the quick-release apparatus prominent

3—FRONT VIEW OF A PARACHUTIST who has discarded his 'chute harness. Note the special chin-piece fixed to the airborne helmet and the face-veil thrown over the shoulders

4—THE PARACHUTIST FULLY EQUIPPED FOR JUMPING, with all his equipment concealed under a smock and his parachute on his back

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

"A DEEP LOVE FOR ENGLISH THINGS"

A Collection of Essays on English Places, Traditions and Histories: A Cornish Historian's Survey; A Brilliant War Book; With Wingate in Burma; Happiness in the Backwoods; Texts on the Turf

INTRODUCING his book of essays, composed over a number of years, most of them war years, Mr. A. L. Rowse says: "I am a little surprised to find how consistent and strong is the theme that runs through them: something more than pride in, a deep love for, English things, for our countryside and towns, with their memories of the people who inhabited them and of the things that took place there—all so much alive for me; for places associated with names that are the very stuff of our tradition, Thomas More and Elizabeth, George Herbert and Hampden and Clarendon, Swift and Horace Walpole, William and Dorothy Wordsworth; the Tower and Hampton Court, Rycote and Great Tew, Trinity Great Court and the High, Wilton, the Close at Salisbury; for our tradition itself and the literature in which it is expressed and handed on." So the title, THE ENGLISH SPIRIT (Macmillan. 12s. 6d.), presents itself.

An historian's title. What stronger, what more apposite start to such a collection than the paper entitled "Mr. Churchill and English History"? In our Prime Minister, Mr. Rowse finds the embodiment of English history; and proceeds to expound how much of the Prime Minister's great strength and prescience in world affairs is derived from his sense of history.

Mr. Rowse claims to be able to write of the English with a detachment which has only been equalled by a more legitimate foreigner, George Santayana. If Mr. Rowse is not English there are 20,000 Cornishmen who 'll know the reason why.

Personally, I find these essays stimulating and provocative. Greatly daring, this Oxford man treads the hallowed stones of Trinity Great Court. Quoting from the Master, soliloquising in his Garden: "The bees have made their hive in a blocked-up window that witnessed the Wars of the Roses."

As a real Elizabethan, he can touch the heart-strings with a few scrawled words in a letter "of proud consolation to the Lady Norris": "Myne owne Crowe, harme not thyself for booteles healpe; but shewe a good example, to comfort yor dolorous yokefellow."

Here is the historian's touch, sparing not the provocation nor the challenge, and distinguished thereby from those more purely literary and urbane collections that used to appear as "Obiter Dicta," by Augustine Birrell, or emanated from the dim-lit library of Edmund Gosse.

THE VALUE OF HYPNOTISM: Lieut. Victor Ahlheim, an American Civil Servant, now in the U.S. Army, shows how easy it is to hypnotise. He recently "put to sleep" some 200 students *en masse* at Queen's University, Belfast, during a demonstration. He did this by fixing their attention on a small silver object and addressing them in low, soothing tones. Lieut. Ahlheim disclosed that by hypnotising airmen before they went to bed and giving them lectures through earphones, the U.S. Air Force reduced a sixteen-weeks training course at the beginning of the war to one of only six weeks at a later stage

One of the best war books I have read is Harry Brown's A WALK IN THE SUN (Secker and Warburg. 6s.). The twenty-seven-year-old author came to England as associate editor of *Yank*, and is at present attached to the Films Division of O.W.I. In a brilliantly laconic style, learned, no doubt, when he was on the staff of the *New Yorker*, he describes a single morning in the life of a platoon of American infantry on a beachhead in Italy. Confused by the death of their senior officers, only half-trusting their instructions, they make their way towards a farmhouse six miles inland. The road is unfamiliar, and their confusion is increased by the breakdown of the overstrained Sergeant Porter and by the mysterious disappearance of a motor-cyclist encountered *en route*.

Then the resourceful Corporal Tyne takes charge and the men acquire new heart. A German armoured car is ambushed and defeated. The final assault on the farmhouse stronghold is one of the most vivid pieces of descriptive writing to come out of this war. The tactics of the action are presented clearly (for once), and the emotions of the men taking part give the reader an unforgettable impression of the extraordinary make-up of the infantryman which combines speed in action, wistful philosophising, witty back-chat and a terrible sense of reality.

Among the greatest creations of contemporary war fiction are the characters of the disillusioned Archimbeau, always wondering what more there will be to endure after the coming battle, and the lovable Rivera and Friedman, a team whose streamlined dialogue recalls Quirt and Flagg of the last war: "Listen, chum, in three years the whole world will be eating C rations. I got it from a friend." "Give it back to him. I ain't interested."

This book can safely be recommended even to those who are tired of war books. As a story it is as exciting as any thriller, and, in addition, it is funny and real and moving. I understand that it has already achieved a phenomenal sale in America.

WITH WINGATE IN BURMA, by David Halley (Hodge and Co. 7s. 6d.), is a curious book. It is told in the form of fiction, but the author actually was a member of one of those adventurous units which took part in the lightning raids into Japanese-occupied territory in 1943. The perky hero of the narrative is not altogether a sympathetic figure, but he does know how to describe weary months of foot-slogging through dense Burmese jungles, what intolerable hardships were endured, and what results were achieved. Before they turned their faces back to home his column had covered some 1,200 miles, destroyed a railway-line, spread alarm and despondency among the enemy and acquired invaluable information.

The highlights of the story are the delivery of rations by air, the hero's conduct when lost alone in the jungle and the waiting for a plane to convey them home—a plane that never arrived. The "crumbs" of information about Wingate himself are as welcome as they are meagre.

We knew that he had inspired his leaders with his own fanatical sense of duty, and we had heard that he took every single man into his confidence before a tactical exercise. But it is news that he always kept a dixieful of onions simmering for his troops' sustenance, and there is one pleasant anecdote. When Major Fergusson lost his wireless code and cabled to Wingate the cryptic biblical message: "My ribs stick out, and thy servant is an hungered," Wingate replied: "Though ye walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, yet fear no evil. For I will feed ye."

In WE TOOK TO THE WOODS (Robert Hale. 12s. 6d.), Louise Dickinson Rich tells how when she was a schoolteacher, seven years ago, she went on a canoe trip through Maine and penetrated to the lonely heart of the woods, the land of wild animals, uncouth lumbermen and lakes that descend from the north like a gigantic staircase to the sea. Here she shared his first meal with a stranger just settling into his log cabin. With a friend, she stayed out the week. In the end, she married him.

There are a few good recipes in her book—for instance, how to bottle deer's meat. But the most valuable is the recipe for happiness. No happier book was ever written. Yet life in the woods is not easy. You have to work hard just to clothe and feed yourself and survive the winter. When her son was born, Mrs. Rich was attended by no one save her husband, with his mittens on and a wool cap pulled down over his ears, reading by lantern light a little book called *If Baby Comes Ahead of the Doctor*. When necessary, they have had to eat baked beans twice a day for ten days. But they discovered that the woods restored to them a lost sense of their own identity.

The secret is that there is so much to enjoy. In spring, new maple syrup fresh from the trees. In summer, fishing with the thrill of fooling the big trout with a fly made from dog fur, embroidery silk and a lot of imagination. Autumn brings the deer-hunting season and exciting preparations for the freeze-up. The slow savouring of winter—as here described—is the best time of all, and Christmas in the woods really does sound something to get starry-eyed about.

Over 500,000 copies of this book have been sold in America, and it is not hard to understand why. We all have a yearning for the simple life, and the hardships of others make good reading. But there is more to it than that. In the present sickness of civilisation, life in the backwoods means hard and direct contact with human nature and the freedom of rushing river and pellucid sky. The frank and slangy writing has no literary merit, but it will take you into the woods that inspired it and will leave you unexpectedly grateful and refreshed. There are some excellent photographs.

Horses and horse-racing have a special fascination for me, but I must own to disappointment with George Roderick's GIMCRACK (Eyre and Spottiswoode. 10s. 6d.). It tells how Albert Beever, a middle-aged gentleman-trainer and steeplechase rider, laid up in bed with a broken leg, is visited by various sportsmen who bring him their problems. Each visit inspires a little sermon on how the Turf can teach its devotees to live the good life. With some difficulty, as might be expected, the author erects a gimcrack pulpit in the stables, and his book is an odd mixture of horse, hospital and homily.

The fellow who rides a nice steady race; risking nothing, does not get to the winning-post . . . and so we established the scriptural text, "Whoso loseth his life shall save it." The lad whose first pony puts him into a funk realises he must subdue his fear of horses, and *via* his mastering that timidity, we get to "Blessed are the meek." Similar anecdotes conclude with such texts as "One crowded hour of glorious life is worth an age without a name"; or "Genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains." This pattern becomes as wearisome as the sad tale of the hero's failure as a horseman.

The book and its agreeable illustrations may please the more moral and less critical followers of the Turf, but I do not think it will satisfy the averagely successful (and sinful) sportsman.

EUROPE'S FOREMOST NURSE: Miss Florence Udell, M.B.E., an Englishwoman in her early forties, has become Nurse No. 1 for Europe by her appointment as Chief Nursing Adviser to the European Office of U.N.R.R.A. The main part of her job will be to advise on the care of 8,000,000 Allied nationals now in Germany, who will be released as we advance farther into the Reich. Miss Udell was trained at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, and the North-Western Fever Hospital, Hampstead. She was awarded the M.B.E. in 1941 for her work with the Scottish Civil Nursing Reserve

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the whole company raise glasses above their heads

"Sios e Sios e Sios e" (down with it)
glasses lowered to breast level

"Null e Null e Null e" (thither with it)
all glasses held out the full extent of the arm

"Nall e Nall e Nall e" (hither with it)
all glasses brought back to the face

The glasses are then drained completely (no heel taps) three loud cheers given and the name of the person toasted shouted. "A ris A ris" (again, again) brings a finale in an extra cheer and for especially honoured toasts the glasses are flung over the left shoulder and smashed.

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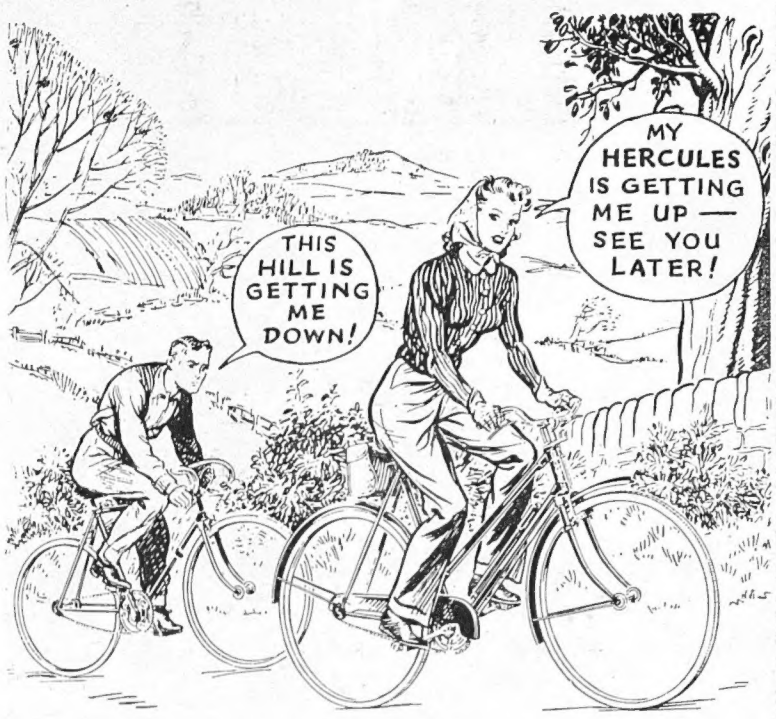

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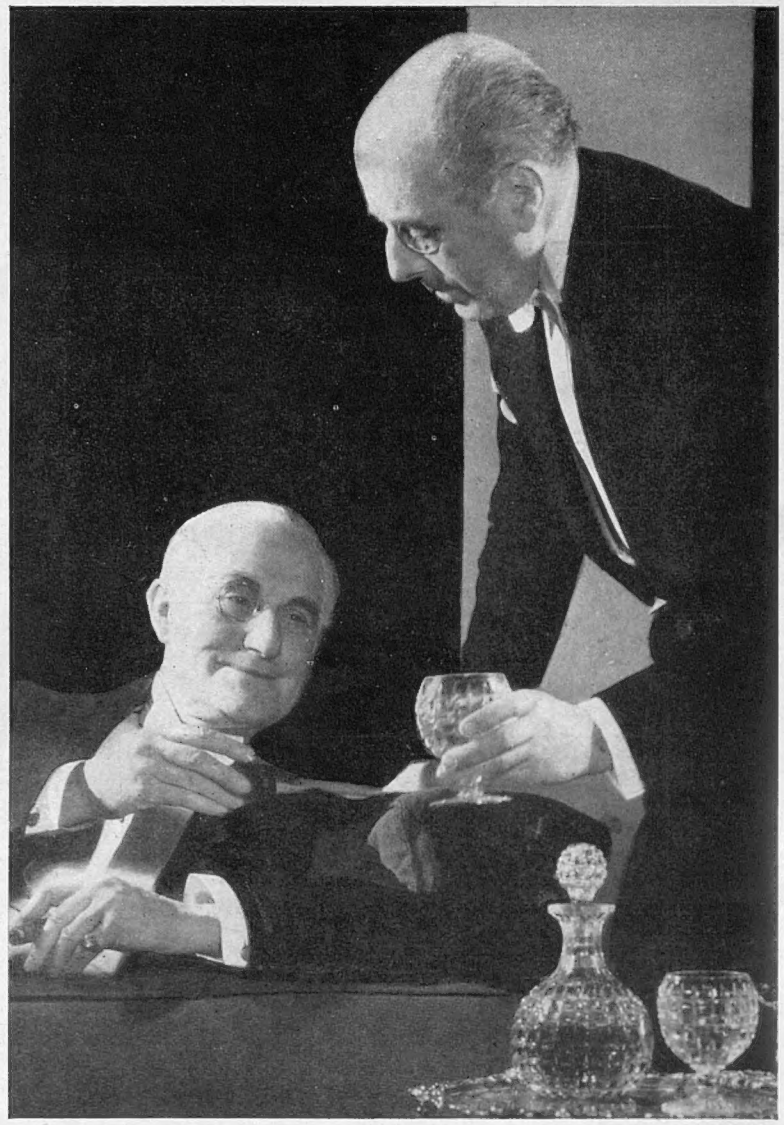

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Thousands of men and women of the Forces the world over will look to the Church Army to make their Christmas Day a little different from the rest of the year.

Lonely old folk, gentlewomen in distress, sick people, children, will be made glad, if Christmas for them can mean something more than just happiness for other people.

Your generous impulse, kindly thought and goodwill, expressed by your gift to the Church Army this Christmas will make such a difference to so many.

Cheques should be made payable to the Church Army, crossed 'Barclays, a/c Church Army' and sent to the Rev. H. H. TREACHER, General Secretary and Head.

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ADVICE BY ASHLEY COURTENAY

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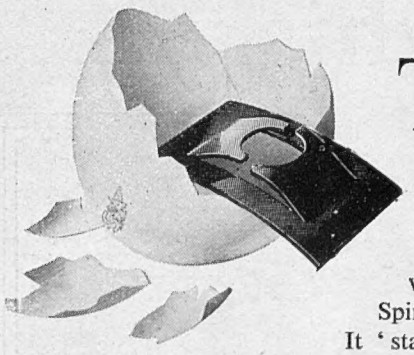

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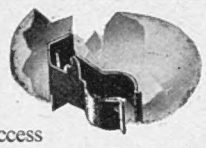

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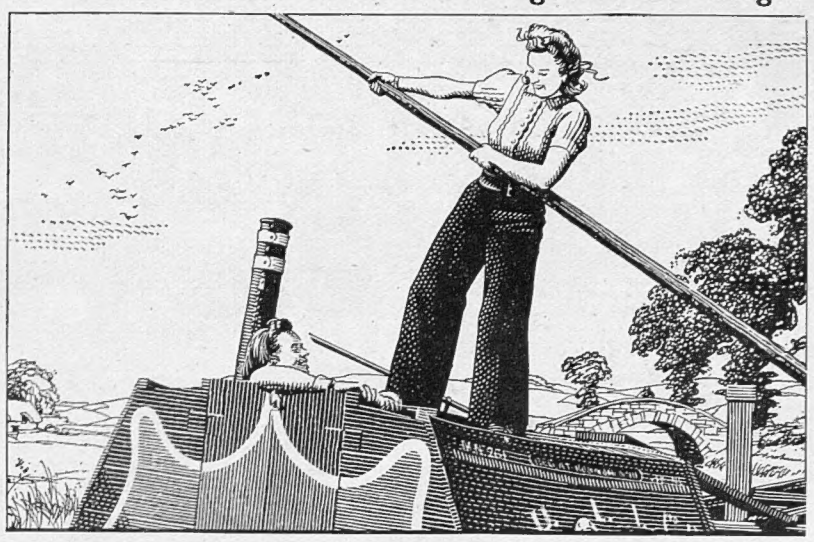
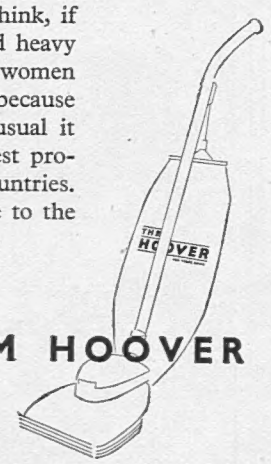
The Hand that held the Hoover guides the Barge!



A Woman Bargee? That's a man's job, you'd think, if ever there was one. Certainly it's hard work and heavy work. But there are very few men's jobs that the women of war-time Britain haven't learnt to tackle! It's because no job has daunted them, however hard or unusual it might be, that Britain today can claim the highest production per head of population of all the allied countries. We at Hoover Ltd. are proud to pay our tribute to the women war-workers of Britain, and say



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